



Universidade do Minho
Escola de Psicologia

Ana Teresa Martins Ferreira de Oliveira **Perceções do sistema de gestão de recursos humanos e o papel da confiança organizacional**

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recursos humanos e o papel da confiança
organizacional**

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recursos humanos e o papel da confiança
organizacional**

Tese de Doutoramento em Psicologia
Especialidade de Psicologia do Trabalho e das Organizações

Trabalho realizado sob a orientação do
Professor Doutor José Bernardo Bicudo Azeredo Keating
e co-orientação da
Professora Doutora Isabel Maria Soares Silva

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Resumo

A gestão de recursos humanos (GRH) é um fenómeno organizacional complexo e multi-dimensional (Keating, 2007). Define regras, estrutura procedimentos entre os colaboradores e as organizações, pode ser formalizada ou não, e possui diferentes objetivos organizacionais. A compreensão do seu impacto, quer ao nível dos colaboradores, quer ao nível das organizações, é consequentemente complexa e continua a não ser compreendida de forma inequívoca. Na tentativa de ultrapassar alguns destes obstáculos, tem sido sugerido a mudança do foco de pesquisa, passando de uma abordagem centrada no conteúdo da GRH para uma abordagem centrada nos processos e/ou dinâmicas psicossociais envolvidas na GRH (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

A presente dissertação pretende contribuir para o desenvolvimento desta área. O modelo de análise presente ao longo de todo o trabalho privilegia o estudo do detalhe processual na operacionalização do sistema de gestão de recursos humanos (SGRH) e centra-se em processos psicossociais que sejam fundamentais na compreensão da GRH. O objetivo geral desta dissertação é a compreensão do SGRH e do seu impacto em dimensões psicológicas relevantes, neste caso, a confiança organizacional e o compromisso na sua vertente afetiva.

Esta investigação desenvolveu-se em duas fases. A primeira foi uma fase qualitativa exploratória e o seu objetivo principal consistiu na compreensão dos processos de operacionalização do SGRH e fatores associados, em especial a confiança. Foram realizadas 14 entrevistas semiestruturadas a informantes chave, nomeadamente diretores da organização, diretores de recursos humanos, diretores do departamento financeiro e chefias operacionais, em 7 organizações.

Os resultados da fase qualitativa realçaram a importância da função de Recursos Humanos (RH) no desenvolvimento do SGRH. Sugeriram que a função RH com influência e autonomia esforça-se por desenvolver uma relação que permita aumentar o ajustamento dos colaboradores nos processos de mudança presentes na operacionalização do SGRH. A importância específica da confiança nos processos de implementação do SGRH é diferente em organizações estruturalmente semelhantes (por exemplo, burocracias) que supostamente teriam padrões de operacionalização similares, ou os mesmos fatores associados. Os resultados desta fase inicial (estudo 1) sugeriram modificações teóricas no modelo de Bowen e Ostroff (2004), as quais foram incorporadas na fase seguinte, designadamente no estudo 2.

A segunda fase foi quantitativa e baseou-se na aplicação de um questionário junto a 21 organizações do setor público e privado (industrial e serviços) e envolveu no total 1677 colaboradores. Esta fase quantitativa deu origem a dois estudos. No primeiro pretendeu-se responder aos seguintes objetivos: a) apresentar uma proposta teórica para a definição do construto “percepção do SGRH” baseado no modelo de Bowen e Ostroff (2004); b) desenvolver um instrumento; c) testar e validar empiricamente o modelo definido em a).

Os resultados obtidos no estudo 2 confirmaram as propostas de modificação da conceitualização teórica de Bowen e Ostroff (2004). O modelo final integra duas meta-dimensões que compõem a percepção do SGRH: a) a relação com os representantes da função RH e b) os efeitos do SGRH. É discutida teoricamente a possível cadeia atribucional da “percepção do SGRH” e a sua ligação com a regulação do comportamento dos colaboradores.

No segundo estudo quantitativo, o estudo 3, foi utilizado o construto “percepção do SGRH” com as dimensões finais do modelo reformulado (resultado do estudo anterior), tendo sido o seu principal objetivo compreender a relação entre a “percepção do SGRH” e o impacto desta no compromisso organizacional afetivo, considerando o papel da confiança organizacional. Nesse âmbito, foram testados dois modelos contrastantes, um modelo moderador *versus* modelo mediador.

Os resultados indicam que o construto “percepção do SGRH” e todas as suas subdimensões estão associadas à confiança organizacional. Duas destas sub-dimensões estão diretamente relacionadas com o compromisso organizacional afetivo. Todas são mediadas (total ou parcialmente) pela confiança organizacional na chefia. Embora o modelo moderador apresente uma interação significativa, o modelo mediador aparenta trazer mais informação à compreensão do processo e do papel da confiança no mesmo. Os resultados contribuem para a robustez do construto “percepção do SGRH” e para a compreensão do seu impacto na confiança e no compromisso.

O conjunto dos resultados obtidos dá a conhecer uma nova conceitualização do SGRH incidindo numa análise de processos. As relações organizacionais analisadas ao nível da interação pessoal e do detalhe parecem constituir bases necessárias ao envolvimento dos indivíduos nas organizações. Estas análises micro relacionais possivelmente podem ser generalizadas pelos indivíduos para macro percepções sobre o SGRH. Se considerarmos que o SGRH é um instrumento que demonstra o envolvimento organizacional (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner, 1998) parece claro que estes micro processos relacionais e psicológicos são necessários na ligação dos indivíduos às organizações e, consequentemente, na criação de uma relação de emprego que satisfaça colaboradores e organizações.

Abstract

The human resource management (HRM) is a complex and multi-dimensional organizational phenomenon (Keating, 2007). HRM defines rules, structures procedures between workers and organizations, can be formalized or not and has different organizational goals. Therefore, the understanding of its impact, in terms of employees or at the organizations level is complex and still not understood. In an attempt to overcome these obstacles, research has suggested changing the research focus from a content based approach of HRM to a process based approach grounded on psychological dynamics and processes evolved on HRM (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

This thesis intends to contribute to the development of this research area. The conceptualization present throughout this work focuses on the study of procedural detail in the operationalization of human resource management system (HRMS) and on psychological processes that are relevant in HRM understanding. The main objective of this dissertation is to comprehend HRM and its impact on relevant psychological dimensions, in this case, organizational trust and commitment in its affective dimension.

Research has been developed in two stages. The first was an exploratory qualitative phase and its specific objective was to understand the operationalization processes of HRMS and associated factors particularly trust. 14 semi-structured interviews with key informants, including top managers, human resource directors, finance managers and line managers in organizations 7 were performed.

The results of the qualitative phase emphasize the importance of the role of the Human Resource (HR) function in the development of HRMS. They suggest that the HR function with influence and autonomy strives to develop a relationship which will enable the adjustment of employees in the operationalization of HRMS change processes. The specific relevance of trust in the HRMS implementation process differs in structurally similar organizations (e.g. bureaucracies) which allegedly would have similar patterns or the similar factors associated. The results of this study suggest modifications of the theoretical Bowen and Ostroffs' (2004) model which were incorporated into the following phase, especially on study 2.

The second phase was quantitative and was based on the application of a questionnaire in 21 organizations from public and private sector, evolving 1677 workers. This phase originated two studies. In the first we had the following objectives: a) to present a theoretical proposal for the definition of the construct "HRMS perception" based on the Bowen and Ostroffs' (2004) model, b) develop an instrument c) empirically test and validate the model defined in a).

Results from study 2 confirm the modification of Bowen and Ostroffs' (2004) theoretical conceptualization. The final model integrates two meta - dimensions that shape HRMS perception: a) the relationship with the representatives of human resources and b) the effects of HRMS . The possible attributional chain of "HRMS perception" and its connection with the behavior regulation of workers is theoretically discussed.

In the second quantitative study, study 3, we used the construct "HRMS perception" with the final dimensions of the reformulated model (result of the previous study). The central objective of this study was to understand the relationship between the construct "HRMS perception" and its impact on affective organizational commitment, considering the role of organizational trust. We tested two contrasting models, a moderator model versus mediator model.

Study 3 indicates that the construct "HRMS perception" and all its sub-dimensions are related to organizational trust. Two of these sub-dimensions are directly related to affective organizational commitment. All are mediated (fully or partially) by trust in leadership. The moderator model presents a significant interaction, however the mediator model seems to bring more information to the understanding of the process. The results contribute to the robustness of the construct "HRMS perception" and the understanding of its impact on trust and commitment.

The results of these integrated studies bring about a new conceptualization of HRMS focusing on processes based approach. The organizational relationships analyzed at the level of personal interaction seem to constitute the necessary basis for the involvement of individuals in organizations. These micro relational analyses possibly are generalized by individuals into macro perceptions about HRMS. If we consider that HRMS is an instrument that demonstrates organizational involvement (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner, 1998) it seems clear that these relational and psychological micro processes are necessary in linking individuals to organizations and consequently in the creation of an employment relationship that satisfies workers and organizations.

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LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS

CO – Confiança Organizacional

CA – Compromisso afetivo

CAO – Compromisso organizacional afetivo

DRH - Departamento de Recursos Humanos

GRH – Gestão de Recursos Humanos

PGRH – Práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos

RH – Recursos Humanos

SGRH – Sistemas de Gestão de Recursos humanos

ABBREVIATIONS LIST

AC – Affective commitment

AOC – Affective organizational commitment

HR – Human Resources

HRD – Human Resources Department

HRM - Human Resources Management

HRMP- Human Resources Management Practices

HRMS – Human Resources Management System

OT - Organizational Trust

“It is useful to know, whether you are pushing against an open door or beating your head against a brick wall. One of the historical objectives should be to distinguish between open doors and brick walls and discover whether, how, and with what consequences, walls may be removed.”

(Smith, 1991 on Reed, 2011, p. 289)

Enquadramento Teórico

A gestão de recursos humanos (GRH) pode ou não estar formalizada na estrutura organizacional (Keating, Silva & Almeida, 2000). Se não estiver formalizada, normalmente encontra-se distribuída e dependente de diferentes intervenientes, o que em termos práticos traz desagregação à tarefa de gerir os recursos humanos e em termos teóricos acrescenta dificuldades na conceptualização da investigação. Estando formalizada é relevante considerar que podem coexistir diferentes interpretações do sistema de gestão de recursos humanos (SGRH) (Tyson, 1999; Keating et. al., 2000). Estas diferenças conduzirão inevitavelmente a diferentes impactos individuais e organizacionais.

O SGRH é um instrumento organizacional que define regras e estrutura procedimentos entre os colaboradores e as organizações. Apesar das organizações incrementarem SGRH cada vez mais especializados e tecnicamente desenvolvidos, o seu impacto junto dos colaboradores não é compreendido de forma inequívoca. Esta dificuldade relatada na literatura (Jackson & Schuler, 1995; Truss, 2001; Guest, 2001; Veloso, 2008;), pode ter como base as distintas realidades organizacionais que possuem diferentes entendimentos e objectivos para o seu SGRH.

O SGRH apresenta inúmeras dificuldades relacionadas, entre outros aspetos, com a dificuldade de comparação de resultados de investigação face à etnocentricidade do objeto de estudo com dinâmicas próprias e de difícil replicação (Bosalie, Dietz & Boon, 2005). Uma questão relevante relacionada com a definição do objecto de estudo, bem como, com a definição dos desenhos de investigação adequados, é debatida por estes autores. É proeminente diferenciar práticas de GRH relevantes por si só, o que pressupõe uma investigação sobre a existência e o número de práticas, ou considerarmos o SGRH. Nesta dissertação vamos estudar o SGRH como um conjunto que pressupõe a existência de uma sinergia entre as práticas. A existência de um conjunto harmonizado de práticas pode contribuir para resultados organizacionais positivos (Jackson &

Schuler, 1995). Até à data, vários foram os modelos de análise global vigentes: a diferenciação entre Sistemas “*Hard*” ou Sistemas “*Soft*”, o paradigma das melhores práticas de GRH, entre outros exemplos possíveis (para uma revisão sobre modelos de GRH pode ser consultado, por exemplo, Legge, 1995 e Veloso, 2008). A investigação na área, no seu cômputo geral, tem-se debruçado na relação da GRH com a performance e a competitividade (Huselid, 1995; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Wright, Gardner & Moynihan, 2003; Gould-Williams, 2003; Becker & Huselid, 2006; Combs, Yongmei, Hall & Ketchen, 2006; Sun, Aryee & Law, 2007; Guest & Conway, 2011), com o compromisso (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Whitener, 2001), com o “*turnover*” (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003), com a certificação da qualidade em pequenas e médias empresas (Cassel et al, 2002; Renuka e Venkateshwara, 2006; Almeida, 2009), com o contrato psicológico (Guest & Conway, 1999; Pathak et al, 2005), entre outros.

As abordagens anteriores situam-se no que podemos conceptualizar como uma abordagem centrada no conteúdo (“*content based approach*”). Esta abordagem não conseguiu dar respostas claras quanto à compreensão da GRH e do seu impacto (Guest, 2001; Veloso, 2008). Neste trabalho, privilegiamos uma abordagem centrada nos processos “*process-based approach*”. A diferença essencial é que a primeira concentra-se nos conteúdos e tipos de práticas existentes enquanto a segunda se debruça na compreensão dos processos sociais e psicológicos envolvidos na dinâmica indivíduo-GRH (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). O foco nos processos procura compreender as dinâmicas organizacionais, com uma perspetiva detalhada dos fenómenos psicológicos e sociais que influenciam as organizações. Os autores consideram relevante, por exemplo, o estudo do detalhe de processos na operacionalização/implementação do SGRH. Esta compreensão poderá trazer contributos que ajudem a explicar em primeiro lugar o objeto de estudo, o SGRH e, em segundo lugar, o seu impacto.

Esta conceptualização teórica tem sido abordada na literatura associada à teoria das trocas sociais, uma teoria sociológica iniciada por Blau, em 1964, e que obteve recentemente

desenvolvimentos significativos (para uma revisão teórica mais recente ver, por exemplo, Cropanzano e Mitchell, 2005 e Shore, Coyle-Shapiro, Chen e Tetrick, 2009). A teoria das trocas sociais estuda a importância das interações entre os indivíduos como processos relevantes nas dinâmicas e resultados organizacionais. Conceitualmente, a teoria assenta na importância da troca repetida de benefícios entre duas partes. Existe o pressuposto de que as atitudes produzem um “*feedback*” recíproco entre indivíduos (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Este pressuposto é designado “*norma de reciprocidade*” e determina que existe reciprocidade de atitudes e comportamentos numa relação profissional. Estas trocas sociais podem ser positivas ou negativas, dependendo do “*input*” primordial ser positivo ou negativo (Whitener, 2001). Esta teoria assenta na importância da compreensão dos processos sociais presentes nas organizações. Reúne as características adequadas, e, por conseguinte, oferece contributos para o desenvolvimento do estudo dos processos na análise do SGRH de Bowen e Ostroff (2004).

No que diz respeito ao SGRH, Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard e Werner (1998) referem que os colaboradores interpretam as ações organizacionais como um indicador do envolvimento da organização. Partindo do pressuposto base da “*norma de reciprocidade*”, estas perceções são “*devolvidas*” à organização através de comportamentos de reciprocidade. Os colaboradores atuarão de acordo com a sua perceção do envolvimento organizacional (Whitener, 2001). O SGRH, mesmo com um papel formal reduzido na organização, possui impacto na perceção individual sobre a realidade organizacional. Pode ser percebido como regulador da relação organização-trabalhador, ao mesmo tempo em que pretende promover resultados individuais, grupais ou organizacionais significativos. Funciona com vista a diminuir a subjetividade de uma GRH informal, desorganizada e difusa, retirando o ónus da inequidade e a imprevisibilidade de uma intervenção com base na subjetividade individual, sem critérios uniformizados e sistemáticos (Keating, 2007). O SGRH é considerado um instrumento relevante na gestão da relação entre colaborador e organização

(Whitener et al., 1998) contribuindo para a criação do clima organizacional, referido por Bowen e Ostroff (2004).

A conceitualização de Bowen e Ostroff (2004) traz a importância do indivíduo e dos processos individuais psicológicos para a agenda da investigação na GRH. Os autores utilizam a teoria da atribuição (Kelley, 1973) para explicar a atribuição causal dos colaboradores sobre o SGRH. Segundo estes autores, o SGRH tem como objetivo a definição de procedimentos justos, visíveis e relevantes, emitindo uma mensagem clara e consistente junto dos colaboradores. As atribuições dos mesmos sobre o sistema serão efetuadas considerando a distintividade, consistência e consenso do mesmo. A atribuição será externa e realizada sobre um objeto que corresponde ao SGRH.

Bowen e Ostroff (2004) salientam a necessidade de investigação neste domínio, nomeadamente, a exploração dos processos relacionados com a implementação do SGRH. No entanto, o modelo necessita ainda de ser testado empiricamente e suportado pela construção de medidas adequadas que permitam a avaliação objetiva dos seus pressupostos. Parece-nos também relevante que a investigação deva dar contributos na operacionalização de outras variáveis que poderão traduzir o impacto do SGRH, além da performance, resultado evidenciado pelo modelo. Esta dissertação pretende dar contributos para as necessidades de investigação anteriormente evidenciadas.

Se pensarmos em dimensões psicológicas relevantes que possam estar relacionadas com a perceção sobre o SGRH, e voltando à teoria das trocas sociais, a confiança organizacional tem sido salientada como uma atitude relevante nos processos organizacionais. Existe uma vasta literatura à volta do conceito da confiança organizacional, caracterizada por várias abordagens teóricas, níveis de análise e modelos empíricos (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Jr, Hansen & Pearson, 2004; Mollering, Bachmann & Lee, 2004; Keating, Silva & Veloso, 2010). É importante clarificarmos o construto de

confiança analisado neste trabalho. Uma distinção que ajuda a clarificar o conceito é a natureza do confiado. Quando o alvo da confiança é um indivíduo remete para a confiança interpessoal, se o alvo é uma organização, surge a confiança institucional (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Neste trabalho vamos utilizar o modelo de confiança interpessoal, baseado em Mayer et al. (1995). Rousseau et al. (1998, p. 395) definem confiança como *“a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another”*.

Na nossa perspectiva, a confiança organizacional reúne um conjunto de características essenciais para ser integrada neste estudo já que possui influência reconhecida nos resultados individuais e organizacionais como o aumento da performance (Costa et al, 2001; Gould-Williams, 2003), o bem-estar dos colaboradores (Baptiste, 2008), a satisfação com o trabalho (Driscoll, 1978; Perry & Mankin, 2007), o desenvolvimento de equipas (Costa et al., 2001) o desenvolvimento de uma relação positiva supervisor - colaborador (Brower, Schoorman & Tan, 2000) e a relação colaborador – organização (Kuvaas, 2008).

Apesar dos diferentes modelos, existe um consenso na literatura relativamente às condições para a existência de confiança interpessoal (Mach, Dolan & Tzafrir, 2010; Lehmann-Willenbrock, Grohmann & Kauffeld, 2012): a presença da vulnerabilidade (Mayer & Davis, 1999) na aceitação do risco (a substituição dos mecanismos de controlo pela confiança), a existência de mútuas interações entre as partes e, por último, as expectativas de uma conduta consistente ao longo do tempo. A confiança organizacional compreende uma expectativa associada de que nas relações de trabalho onde existe confiança (nomeadamente entre colaborador e chefia) coexiste uma colaboração mais eficaz entre os membros de uma organização (Keating et al., 2010).

Ao considerarmos o SGRH como um possível indicador de envolvimento da organização para com o colaborador, como referido anteriormente (Whitener et al., 1998), o envolvimento do trabalhador para com a organização (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979; Carochinho, Neves & Jesuíno,

1998) possui as condições adequadas para ser o indicador de impacto testado nesta dissertação. O compromisso organizacional, na sua vertente afetiva, apesar de se constituir como um construto maduro (Morrow, 2011), tem sido alvo de poucos estudos que foquem a sua relação com a GRH (e.g. Sanders et al., 2008). Não obstante esta escassez, apresentamos três exemplos do estudo desta relação: o trabalho desenvolvido por Whitener (2001) que encontrou resultados que suportam a relação entre as práticas de GRH, o suporte organizacional percebido, confiança na chefia e o compromisso organizacional; o trabalho desenvolvido por Taylor, Levy, Boyacigiller e Beechler (2008), no qual foi encontrado um efeito significativo entre o SGRH e o compromisso organizacional numa empresa multinacional; e o estudo de Kuvaas (2006), que identificou relações entre a satisfação com a avaliação de desempenho, a intenção de “*turnover*” e o compromisso afetivo. Na nossa perspetiva é relevante explorar se o compromisso psicológico pode resultar da perceção do SGRH, como referem Whitener et al. (1998), já que se este for percebido pelos colaboradores como uma ação de envolvimento da organização pode ter impacto na forma como estes se comprometem com a organização.

Plano geral de Investigação

Esta investigação pretende utilizar uma perspetiva macro com base na exploração de processos (Wright & Boswell, 2002) e no pressuposto de que o estudo de um conjunto global de várias práticas permite-nos compreender melhor o seu impacto (Whitener, 1997). Pretende-se elaborar quadros conceptuais, explicitando ligações entre variáveis durante os processos investigados que permitam compreender de forma mais pormenorizada a GRH.

Lawler (2007), realçou a necessidade dos estudos nesta área se aproximarem da prática, de “*irem ao terreno*”, diminuindo a divisão entre teoria e prática, e construindo-a partir dos dados. Este

projecto de investigação tenta contribuir para o esclarecimento destas questões, usando abordagens metodológicas baseadas na evidência.

Pretendemos contribuir para o conhecimento dos processos complexos que decorrem nas organizações, o que ajudará a descomplexificar, a agilizar e a melhorar relações de emprego, pensando especificamente na importância das interações através da confiança organizacional.

Consideramos fundamental compreender a GRH sob o ponto de vista de distintos interlocutores relevantes nos SGRH: os gestores de recursos humanos e os colaboradores.

Bowen e Ostroff (2004) referem que a compreensão da GRH deve ser feita junto dos colaboradores. A investigação junto destes, focando as suas perceções sobre o SGRH, é considerado um fator crítico na compreensão da realidade organizacional atual (Bosalie et al., 2005). Guest (1999) salienta que a forma como os colaboradores percebem e avaliam a GRH tem impacto nos seus comportamentos e atitudes nas organizações. Nos seus trabalhos Grant e Shields (2002) enfatizam que *“Too little is known about how employees, as the subject of Human Resource Management react to its practice”* (p. 313). Esta dissertação pretende desenvolver investigação neste domínio, seguindo assim o repto da literatura recente (Edgar & Geare, 2005; Farndale, Hope-Hailey, Row, Ecy & Kelliher, 2010; Farndale, Hope-Hailey & Kelliher, 2011).

Por outro lado, Bowen e Ostroff (2004) salientam também a necessidade de estudar a implementação do SGRH, constituindo este processo um ponto-chave na análise processual. Partindo do pressuposto que os gestores de recursos humanos são os principais decisores na implementação do processo, é relevante que sejam incluídos nesta investigação. Este trabalho pretende responder a um desafio de análise *“dupla”*, considerando que a investigação global ganha consistência ao abordarmos dois grupos de intervenientes organizacionais com diferentes papéis e possivelmente diferentes perceções sobre o sistema, os gestores de recursos humanos e os colaboradores.

Considerando a implementação do SGRH, a confiança organizacional pode ter aqui um papel diferente do que lhe é habitualmente reconhecido, mas igualmente relevante. A confiança tem vindo

a ser reconhecida como uma dimensão importante nas relações organizacionais, como referido anteriormente, entre chefia e colaborador. Investigações recentes mostram a relevância da confiança na modificação de políticas organizacionais (Tzafrir, 2005). O trabalho do autor citado sugere que os gestores de recursos humanos têm tendência para oferecer mais formação e modificações na política de promoções internas na organização, quando a confiança nos seus colaboradores é alta. Consequentemente, a implementação do SGRH poderá ser diferente considerando o papel desta variável no comportamento dos gestores de recursos humanos.

Em suma, ancorado numa abordagem centrada na compreensão dos processos, pretende-se que esta dissertação possa dar o seguinte contributo geral:

- Compreender o SGRH e o papel que a confiança tem na relação entre a perceção deste sistema e o compromisso afetivo.

O projecto de investigação desenvolver-se-á utilizando um método misto. O uso de metodologias qualitativas e quantitativas tem sido reforçado pela literatura como um foco importante na criação de teoria, já que permite construir e desenvolver, bem como testar e solidificar (Shah & Corley, 2006). O trabalho será desenvolvido em duas fases.

Na primeira fase qualitativa pretendíamos explorar caminhos teóricos, delimitá-los, bem como compreender e aprofundar processos e interações de forma minuciosa. A metodologia qualitativa exploratória foi relevante na compreensão do processo de implementação do SGRH. Esta fase é composta por um estudo (apresentado no capítulo 1) que envolveu a realização de 14 entrevistas semi-estruturadas (no anexo 1 é apresentado o guião de entrevista) a informantes-chave, nomeadamente diretores da organização, diretores de recursos humanos, diretores do departamento financeiro e chefias operacionais em 7 organizações. Utilizámos a análise temática de conteúdo “template analysis” (King, 1998) como estratégia de análise de dados. Este estudo contemplou os seguintes objectivos específicos:

- a) Explorar o processo de implementação do SGRH e fatores associados;

b) Explorar o papel da confiança nesse processo.

Os resultados obtidos nesta fase foram integrados na fase seguinte, nomeadamente na modificação do modelo teórico de Bowen e Ostroff (2004). No geral, tais modificações prenderam-se com a importância da influência e autonomia da função Recursos Humanos (RH), da relação desta função com os trabalhadores em processos de implementação do SGRH e com o papel da confiança no desenvolvimento desta relação.

Na fase quantitativa realizámos dois estudos. Os estudos são correlacionais e, em ambos, foi aplicado um questionário de auto-relato. Este questionário (ver anexo 2) foi aplicado em 21 organizações do setor público e privado (industrial e serviços), tendo sido obtidas 1677 respostas. Guest, Conway e Dewe (2004) definem cinco metodologias possíveis para o estudo da GRH: uma boa medida de consistência interna como o alfa de Cronbach, a análise fatorial (e.g. análise de componentes principais ou análise confirmatória), análise de clusters, análise de regressão com variáveis de interação e análise sequencial *em árvore*. Utilizámos estas metodologias analíticas seguindo esta orientação teórica e metodológica.

Nesta segunda fase quantitativa trabalhámos o modelo teórico de Bowen e Ostroff (2004), com desenvolvimentos teóricos e empíricos que surgem da fase qualitativa inicial e da revisão da literatura. Os instrumentos existentes mostram-se reduzidos para uma compreensão do SGRH (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Por conseguinte no estudo dois (apresentado no capítulo 2) foram delineados os seguintes objetivos específicos:

- a) Apresentar uma proposta teórica para a definição do construto “perceção do SGRH” com base no modelo de Bowen e Ostroff (2004);
- b) Desenvolver um instrumento de medida (ver anexo 2, parte II)
- c) Testar e validar empiricamente o modelo desenvolvido e adaptado em a).

Em suma, o estudo 2 visou compreender se o modelo era viável de uma forma generalizada, em diferentes SGRH com diferentes níveis de investimento quer estratégico, quer relacional (Guest,

2001; Combs, Liu, Hall & Ketchen, 2006). Utilizámos a análise fatorial exploratória como técnica estatística. Debates a congruência entre o modelo teórico inicial e os resultados empíricos encontrados, dando contributos na definição e consolidação da “perceção do SGRH”.

No terceiro estudo (apresentado no capítulo 3) utilizámos o construto “perceção do SGRH” com as sub-dimensões finais do modelo reformulado (resultantes do estudo anterior) e analisámos o seu impacto no compromisso organizacional afetivo, através da confiança organizacional (na parte III do questionário apresentado no anexo 2 podem ser consultadas as medidas usadas para avaliar ambas as dimensões). Assim, o objetivo central do terceiro e último estudo consistiu em analisar o impacto da “perceção do SGRH” no compromisso afetivo considerando o papel da confiança tendo nesse sentido sido testados dois modelos contrastantes de análise de processos, usando a confiança organizacional como variável moderadora *versus* variável mediadora num esforço de esclarecer o papel desta variável no processo. A nível metodológico utilizamos as seguintes técnicas estatísticas: análise de clusters, regressão hierárquica linear com testes *pós-hoc* e regressão sequencial. Resultados detalhados são descritos em cada um dos respectivos estudos empíricos.

Capítulo I

The Human Resource Management implementation processes and Organizational trust

Ana Teresa Ferreira, José Keating and Isabel Silva

Abstract

Purpose: Recent research stresses the need to increase the focus on Human Resource Management System (HRMS) implementation processes (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Building on Social Exchange Theory and the work by Whitener (1997, 1998), we explored which factors trigger Human Resources (HR) modifications. Considering the role of organizational trust in diminish risk perception by workers and possibly to promote adjustment, we explored it in HRMS implementation processes. The understanding of HRMS implementation processes can be relevant in the reduction of the negative impact of these modifications on workers. **Design/Methodology:** We used a qualitative approach and select 14 key informants from seven organizations: HR Directors, Finance /Administrative Director, Top leaders and line managers, from public sector and from private sector. **Results** Our findings suggest the existence of different patterns of HRMS implementation in the same organizational structures (e.g. bureaucracies). Our results suggest that regardless of the similar settings, HR function can lead to unique solutions that have impact in the development of different patterns of HRMS implementation processes. HR function uses social exchanges to develop a relationship with employees as a relevant criterion in preparation to change and to monitor change episodes; also organizational trust is relevant in one of three patterns found regarding implementation. A model was developed describing (a) context conditions that determined the development of (b) triggers of HR change process, (c) implementation strategies and (d) factors that difficult the implementation. **Research/Practical Implications:** These results suggest that power of HR function is relevant in the change process. This factor modifies the dimensions considered in the change process. They also suggest that the active development of HR function relationship with

employees and trust is developed as a strategy towards adjustment, increasing perceived control and reducing the risk perception to employees in order to promote adjustment. **Originality/Value:** To our knowledge, the research is the first to explore the human resource implementation process with a special concern with comparison of social exchange mechanisms and organizational trust in the active development of relational strategies as a solution towards adaptation.

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Exploratory results of this work were published:

"Ferreira, Teresa; Keating, J. & Silva, I. (2010). Managers perceptions about employees acceptance of HR practices and its interactions with modifications in the HR system. In S. Menon (Ed.), *Competing values in an uncertain environment: Managing the paradox*. (p. 70-76). LA, USA: International Society for the Study of Work & Organizational Values”.

“Ferreira, A. T., Keating, J., Silva, I., & Veloso, A. (2010). Tomada de decisão em gestores de recursos humanos e confiança organizacional. In C. Nogueira, I. Silva, L. Lima, A. T. Almeida, R. Cabecinhas, R. Gomes, C. Machado, A. Maia, A. Sampaio & M. C. Taveira (Eds.) *VII Simposio de Investigação em Psicologia*. (pp.2451-2466). Lisboa: Associação Portuguesa de Psicologia”

Introduction

In general, research of employment relationship uses conceptual models that relate univocally employees' attitudes towards work, or other organizational characteristics, such as the HRMS to organizational outcomes (e.g. productivity, turnover, organizational performance) (e.g. Huselid, 1995; Russ & McNeilly, 1995; Zacharatos, Barling & Iverson, 2005). Employee's satisfaction, motivation, perceptions of justice or trust towards organizational referents have all been researched as possible predictors of organizational results in this kind of conceptual framework. Although this type of research is, without much doubt, valid in the general case, some authors suggest that the processes in which these interactions occur should be taken into consideration when trying to understand these relationships (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Bosalie, Dietz & Boon, 2005; Guest & Conway, 2011; Li, Frenkel, & Sanders, 2011; Sanders & Frenkel, 2011).

The HRMS is an organizational tool that intends to contribute to development of stability, coherence and justice in organizations through the unification of the procedures and cultural accepted behaviours in the organizations (Keating, 2007). The importance of HR function and HRMS in the organizations are commonly accepted as positive and crucial as organizations increase their size and complexity. This system acts as an instrument that restrains and determines the relationship between organization and employees (Keating, 2007). However, the impact of this system on the individual or organizational results remains to understand (Boxall, Ang & Bartram, 2011).

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) suggested as future agenda the exploration of the implementation processes of the HRM system, as relevant factors that impact the resources devoted to the HR function. If HRM practices and their outcomes are relevant to organizational level outcomes, as they seem to be, by what process this outcome is generated and what role is there for psychological dimensions like trust? One area where these interactions deserve exploration concerns the

development and implementation of human resources management practices and its relationship with social exchange mechanisms (Cropanzano, Howes, & Grandey, 1997), specially organizational trust processes (Whitener, 1997, 2001; Gould-Williams, 2003). Trust is selected among several other attitudes resulting from social exchange mechanisms, by its relevancy in relationships considering its assumed vulnerability and its importance in individual risk behavior (Mayer et al., 1995). Also it Tzafrir (2005), for example, demonstrated the relevance of trust on the definition of HR policies. In his work human resource managers show a tendency to offer more training and modifications in internal promotion policies when organizational trust is high. Although it has been frequently studied on the literature, trust remains to be one of the “*least understood of the significant concepts in social sciences*” (Das & Teng, 2004, p. 86).

The research presented is a starting step, and in this paper, we explore how organizations decide to change and implement HR processes. Until this moment, little empirical work has been done and explored without restrictions the HR implementation processes, building theory from the data and allowing them to speak for themselves, in an effort to fully understand the dimensions and factors that interfere in the process (Guest, 2001).

The objective is to comprehend HR implementation process and associated factors. We want to perceive which factors trigger and influence HRM implementation, exploring the decisions and behaviours held by decision-makers and the restrictions within which they decide. Also we intend to explore the role of organizational trust in the process. There is not enough research that has explored, in any detail, the importance of interactions and social exchange mechanism, specifically organizational trust in the HR implementation process. The focus on this article is on HR processes, specifically on the work developed by the HR function, rather than the issue of which particular HR policies and strategies are used.

Overview

We developed this work in 4 sections. We begin with a revision of the literature of HRMS and relevance of implementation processes. We continue with a revision on social exchange theory, a theory within HRM literature that has special concerns with the organizational social trades. We then present a revision of organizational trust and the assumptions that lead us to choose the integration of this specific dimension. In the second section we present the methodological concerns and procedures. In the third section we present results. We conclude this article with discussion and possibilities for future research.

Relevance of HRM implementation processes

Bosalie et al. (2005) conducted a review on the link between HRM and performance, discussing gaps and a relevant future research agenda. These authors argument that it is relevant to go beyond the presence or absence of HRM practices, and understanding the related processes that have impact on the HRM system. One of these processes is the implementation process that precedes the system. Several authors have argued that the presence or absence of HRM practices is insufficient to understand the system itself and its organizational or individual outcomes (Guest, 2001; Bosalie et al., 2005; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Guest & Conway, 2011).

In their review, Bosalie et al, found a scarcity of studies that examined the role of HR function in terms of leadership and change, however no studies have researched the quality of HRM implementation as a necessary condition for its effectiveness. There is a scarcity of studies who have worked the implementation of HR, despite its relevance (for some examples see Veloso, 2008 and Stanton et al., 2010). The HR strategy literature can give some contributes to this development. The strategy of HR implementation was discussed by Becker and Huselid (2006) as a mediating variable in the “black box” that links the HRM towards performance. The strategy of implementation is

relevant and should be aligned with organizations' global strategy. They argue that HR implementation strategy should consider the "fit" between HR design and the business processes. This articulation is described as having inputs on increasing performance. This need to "fit" within each organization addresses the need to have specific HRM systems within each organization, with different strategic orientations. These researches are relevant as they address the relevance of HR implementation process.

Catherine Truss has developed a line of work, especially in the public sector, using qualitative work and exploring different views about the HR processes (Truss, 2001, 2009a, 2009b; Alfes, Truss & Gill, 2010). Her work (specially the 2009b) debates the roles adopted by the HR function and the factors that constrain the strategic role. Her results show that organizations that share substantial contextual conditions can develop different HR roles and forms. The temporal dimension is key, as it allows developing HR departments through a particular trajectory. Her studies show that there isn't a clear distinction between human choice and contextual constraints *"Setting can act as much as an enabler, of HR, as it can constraint (...) Formal choice (...) interacts with informal and emergent practices that lead to novel and unexpected HR functional forms"* (Truss, 2009b, p. 734). These findings discuss the relevance of HR function itself in the implementation process. Therefore, the social exchange theory and the presence of significant interactions between agents of the function and employees seem to be a relevant next step on the literature that intends to develop HR processes.

The work by Veloso (2008) brings about different implementation processes in the organizations, since they can be *"organic"* or *"programmatic"*. The *"organic"* implementation processes gives response to organizations needs and problems versus a *"programmatic"* process that doesn't consider organizations' particularities. The *"organic"* implementation was perceived by employees as emotionally closer and brought organizational trust as a perceived outcome of the

process. This research intends to develop these ideas exploring the contribution of social exchange trades and trust in the process.

Social exchange theory

Social exchange is a sociological based theory which considers the importance of organizational investment in employees (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010; Kuvaas, 2008). This model developed by Blau, assumes that *“There is a need of human beings to respond to each other's received benefits in order to continue to receive it and not break the cycle of cooperation. This perception activates the mechanism that initiates the social interactions ”* (Blau, 1964, p. 91-92).

According to social exchange theory, reciprocal behavior emerges with the repeated exchange between two parties due to attitudes that produce a reciprocal feedback. For example, managers' investment in employee's empowerment, recognition and in subordinates' personal abilities might enable the development of positive behavior towards the leader. This assumption is called "norm of reciprocity". It determines that the outputs of exchange (attitudes and behaviors) are reciprocal and can be positive or negative, depending on the input received by the employee (Blau, 1964). This central rule of the model has been discussed and tested (for recent reviews of the theory see Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005, and Shore, Coyle-Shapiro, Chen and Tetrick, 2009) and it remains a *“universally accepted principle”*.

Social exchange theory has been used in HRM literature, as a theory concerned with sociological and psychological dimensions present in organizations (Whitener, 2001). Some researches have explored the importance of social exchange theory on the relationship between HRM and organizational and individual results, such as HRM and performance (Kuvaas, 2006, 2008; Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008; Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009; Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010), satisfaction, motivation, desire to remain and organizational citizenship (Aryee, Budhwar & Chen, 2002; Gould-Williams, 2003; Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005; Gould-Williams & Mohamed, 2010) perceived

organizational support in turnover (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003), commitment and perceived organizational support (Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Organizational trust

In this research we intend to explore the HRM implementation processes on organizations, based on social exchange theory, but also exploring the role of one specific dimension, that has been subject of considerable attention by recent research, organizational trust (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998; Whitener, 2001). A common accepted definition is the one used by Rousseau et al. (1998) as “*a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another*” (p. 395).

Trust has influence on individual and organizational results as an attitude that increases performance (Gould -Williams, 2003), well-being at work (Baptiste, 2007) and satisfaction at work (Driscoll, 1978; Perry & Mankin, 2007). It is also been described as important on the team development (Costa et al, 2001) and on positive leader-member relationships (Whitener, 1997; Brower, Schoorman & Tan, 2000). If we consider HR implementation processes specifically, trust has also been described as an outcome of the process. Veloso (2008) studied the HRM implementation process using case studies. She established differences between an “*organic*” implementation that gives response to organizations needs and problems against a “*programmatic*” process that doesn’t consider organizations’ requirements. The organic implementation was perceived by employees as emotionally closer and trust are the most relevant perceived outcomes to employees. Thus, trust is recognized as relevant not only for supervisors and employees relationship but also as interfering in the HR implementation process.

If we consider risk perception, theoretical models highlight the need for the existence of risk and interdependence for the establishment of organizational trust (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust is not the ignorance of risk but a willingness to take the risk (Mayer et

al., 1995, p.712). The trust level is an indication of the amount of risk we are willing to take (Mayer et al. 1995; Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007). Thus, trust can be recognized as relevant for supervisors and employees acting towards the reduction of risk perception and improving the social exchange mechanisms and relational outcomes (Whitener, 2001). According to Das and Teng (2004), trust indicates a low level of risk that makes the individual more willing to take the risk and to act. This interference of trust is relevant as it can reduce the employees' risk perception towards change, acting as a facilitator in HR modifications and promoting adjustment.

According to Whitener (1997) trust emerges with the repeated exchange of benefits between two parties as a product of these social exchanges. She debates organizational trust has a crucial factor that should be developed on organizations who wish to have employees engaged and productive. Managers can strategically develop trust in the cycle of social exchanges, taking the initiative and starting to show trust in their team. How? Managers can reward trusts' behaviors and demonstrate clear procedures towards their employees. These behaviors favor the development of employee's trust in their manager, contributing to the strengthening of the professional relationship and increasing its performance (Davis, Schoorman & Donaldson, 1997; Tzafrir, 2005).

Considering HRM development on organizations, organizational trust could play a relevant role. Tzafrir (2005) conducted a study with 104 human resource managers in industry, services and trade. His study aimed to "*assess the conditions that trigger trust, or whatever it is that makes managers accept the vulnerability present in management actions that are part of HRM*" (p. 1600). In his research, trust was an important variable in the expectation of the managers, reducing the perception of vulnerability and risk. Gould-Williams (2003) found significant correlations between organizational trust and high-involvement practices which have been associated with increased performance.

Considering there are different models that describe trust we follow Mayer, Davis & Shoorman (1995) model of trust and according to the authors the development of trust requires

individual vulnerability and propensity to trust from the trustor and the need of interdependence between trustee and trustor. Trust develops as a function of the trustee's perceived ability, benevolence and integrity. Trust allows the decrease of the perceived risk, by reducing the need to control. The level of trust is an indication of the amount of risk individuals are willing to take (Mayer et. al. 1995) which varies considering the situation but also according to the evaluation based on the antecedents of the trustor (Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007).

Design

This research was developed as an initial part of a broader project, is inductive, without the hypothesis formulation. Guest (2001) brings about the importance of adopting other methodological techniques in the development of theory on Human Resource Management. This is an exploratory study in which the main concern is to comprehend HR implementation process and associated factors, exploring the decisions and behaviours held by decision-makers and the restrictions within which they decide. Also we intend to explore the role for organizational trust in the process. These objectives are congruent with a qualitative approach, as we intend to “*gain a fuller understanding of the processes that can provide insight and build theory from the data*” (Guest, 2001, p.1105). Truss (2001) argues that more qualitative methods are needed to study the phenomenon of HRM, as a way to overcome some of the limitations of the existing studies that have, almost all, used quantitative techniques. Organizational research has used qualitative approaches. Grounded theory has been used for example on organizational culture, organizational grow, organizational change and innovations and work teams (Lansisalmi, Peiró & Kivimaki, 2004), case study research has also been used on organizational research on HRM (for some examples see Veloso (2008) and Stanton, Young, Bartram, & Leggat (2010); Truss (2009a), among others.

In this research we conducted a thematic analysis of the text using “template analysis” as a data analytical technique (King, 1998). This technique is a style of thematic analysis that balances

some degree of structure in the process of analyzing textual data with the flexibility of adapting it to the needs of a particular study (King, 1998) allowing for the existence of a pre-defined theme. The main concern of the technique is the development of a coding template, usually based on initial data or theoretical frame, which then is applied to other data, revisited and reapplied. This technique was selected considering its degree of flexibility. Also, the assumption of the existence of some theoretical framework that precedes the analysis was relevant in the choice. This approach does not suggest a set of sequence coding and has process flexibility, allowing to develop theory as the process occurs. It allows the theory to shift as the framework and concepts are examined, which is congruent with the objectives of this exploratory research.

In order to understand time sequence and considering that this study is cross-sectional, with only one interview, we used the CIT method (the critical incident technique) develop by Flanagan in 1954, with modifications. It was used as an effort towards the understanding of processes that had success or fail, as the participant would describe the entire process more clearly. This technique is especially useful when the study is exploratory and intends to “*increase knowledge about a little-known phenomenon*” (Gremler, 2004, p. 67) . It is also adequate in developing the conceptual frame towards following studies (Gremler, 2004). We did not restrict our participants’ response. We choose not to impose the interviewed a specific practice or a specific implementation as a way to allow for participants to describe their experiences from their own meanings. We asked to report a critical (negative or positive) situation regarding HR implementation process in that organization.

Participants

Research participants were 14 key informants from 7 organizations, HR Directors, top leaders and line managers. A non-random purposeful sample, with maximum variation possible was selected. We considered the diversity among the distinct natures of the HR function in public and private sector (Gould-williams & Davies, 2005; Truss, 2009a), industry and services (Combs, Liu,

Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Guest, 2001). The informants were selected based on their contribution to the phenomena diversity on study and to the specific objectives of the research. We collect data from three public and four private organizations. In public sector we have two City Councils and one industry. In private sector we have two services provider and two industries. In private organizations all had HR Department formalized, therefore we conducted an in-depth interview with the HR Director. In the public organizations, it didn't exist a formalized Human Resource function. The function was inside the Finance/Administrative Department. In these cases we interviewed the Finance Chief, the top management of the organization and the line managers responsible for HR and quality sections. It is relevant to discuss that in this research we focus on HR function, perceived as the HR technicians, without line managers, despite the distribution of the function. It is relevant to consider the work by Dany, Guedri and Hatt (2008) and by Renwick (2003) which recognized the relevance of the line on HR systems, however they also argue that HR competence and specific knowledge are relevant. Their findings suggest that when the main decision maker is the HR function (technicians) the system is more effective.

Table n° 1: Characterization of the sample

Organi zation	Sector	HR Function interviewed	Business	Dimension (n° employees)	HR Training Area	Code
1	Private	HR Director	Automobile industry	2000	Engineering	HR Dir.O1
2	Private	HR Director	Software development	230	Psychology	HR Dir.O2
3	Public	Administrative/ Finance Chief	City Councils	250	Law	CF O3
3	Public	Top Manager	City Councils	250	Finance	Top management O3
3	Public	HR line manager	City Councils	250	-	Line manager 1 O3
3	Public	Quality line manager	City Councils	250	-	Line manager 2 O3
4	Public	Administrative/ Finance Chief	City Councils	500	Management	CF O4
4	Public	Top Manager	City Councils	500	Law	Top management O4
4	Public	HR line manager	City Councils	500	-	Line manager 1 O4
4	Public	Quality line manager	City Councils	500	-	Line manager 2 O4
5	Private	HR Director	Textil Industry	600	Psychology	HR Director O5
6	Private	HR Partner	Retail and distribution	8000	Psychology	HR Partner O6
6	Private	HR International Director	Retail and Distribution	8000	Psychology	HR Director O6
7	Public	HR Training Responsible	Graphical and metallurgical industry	738	Human Resource Management	HR Training O7

Procedure

Research participants were recruited through a formal request by email. Each HR Director or Finance /Administrative Director was sent an email with the purpose and scope of the study, as well as ethical considerations about the confidence of the data. In public organizations where we interviewed the top manager, a formal request was also sent. The line managers interviewed were assigned by the Finance/Administrative Director, considering their role in the HR tasks.

Each key informant contributes to the study with one interview. The interviews were conducted in organizations in the schedule of work. We had difficulties in the access to the organization 7. The informant of organization 7 only was available by email and the information

gathered was limited. It contributed to the study because it was relevant in the understanding of thematic analysis and in building the template. However, for this reason, organization 7 is not contemplated in the results or discussion because we didn't had sufficient information about some specific issues (such as HR power, organizational decision making). The other 13 interviews were conducted face to face. Each interview lasted between 60 to 120 minutes and all were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. We had one exploratory script with open questions, based on the literature review. The study objectives were based on letting key informants speak freely. The main themes of the script are: 1) Describe the organization (history, structure, productive processes and strategy); 2) Describe the HRM system; 3) Describe the HR function (power, decentralization, training, and technical and strategic dimension, hierarchical level); 4) Explore *how* processes of change occur in the HRM system, factors that trigger change and indicators in decision making processes (considering critical incidents); 6)) Explore *how* processes of HR implementation of new practices happen and perceived results considering success or failure; 7) Explore *the role for* organizational trust in the HR implementation process.

The starting points for our initial template were the interview topic guides. The initial template consists of four major themes, sub-divided into specific sub-themes (Table 2).

Table n°2: Initial template

Initial template	
1. Organization	
1.1 Organizations' History	
1.2 Creation and development	
1.3 Organizational structure	
1.4 Organogram / N° employees	
1.5 Productive process	
1.6 Strategy	
2. Human Resource Management System	
2.1 Recruitment & Selection	
2.2 Socialization	
2.3 Training	
2.4 Performance evaluation	
3. HR Implementation process	
3.1. HR function power	
3.2. Hierarchical or functional level of the HR function	
3.3. HR Department characterization	
3.4. Strategy definition and HR interference	
3.5. HR practices definition	
3.6. HR implementation process	
3.7. Change in practices	
3.8. Process of change (implementation process)	
3.9. Critical processes (perceived success versus perceive failure)	
3.10. Expected results versus found results	
3.11. Outcomes	
4. Organizational trust	
4.1. Perceived importance of organizational trust in the HR implementation process	

The collection of the data stopped when we reached the saturation of the data (Creswell, 2007). It is relevant to report that researchers collect data, analyzed and then collect more data. This is a central assumption of qualitative analysis that is important to respect, as the only way to ensure a valid theoretical saturation (Creswell, 2007). Data were collected between June 2009 and September 2011.

After an analysis of the categories (which we refer as a “horizontal analysis”), from the data point of view it was difficult to understand the process. Considering that this is a dynamic and dialectical process, efforts were made towards a contextualization of the data considering the

organizational contexts that determine the process. A new analysis was made and after the “horizontal analysis” we developed a vertical analysis, within each organization, in an effort towards the understanding of the development of the process. This “vertical analysis” enabled to understand the process in a more clear perspective. This “vertical analysis” is described in the results section. It consists in describing the process across different organizations, using the same categories. After this “vertical analysis” we conducted another final “horizontal analysis” which is presented in the results section on “factors that difficult the implementation” and on the discussion of results. The “factors that difficult the implementation” are presented in a horizontal analysis because they are not part of the narrative that is used in each organization towards the description of the process. This theme has its own narrative and is described more clearly in an “horizontal analysis” The discussion assumes that the reader already understood the processes within each organization, described in the result section. The “horizontal analysis” is presented regarding the concerns on discussion with the debate of emergent categories and its development.

This double analysis was an effort to clarify the researcher about the process. Also efforts were made in order to describe a coherent narrative that doesn't blur the reader (Creswell, 2007) in a very complex set of data. This research emphasizes the process and results are described coherent with this approach.

Data analysis

The data were content analyzed and coded using template analysis. The analytical process was based on immersion on the data and repeated coding's and comparisons. Analysis began with two depth readings of the interviews. Then the data were coded in categories that were systematically compared and contrasted. These codes were then related in an effort to find relationships between categories and tested them against our data. Categories were compared until saturated, as no new codes or categories were produced (Creswell, 2007). No concerns related to the frequency of

responses were considered and the attribution of the codes is made by its relevance to the objective of the research, specially the category's centrality in relation with other categories and the clarification towards the more general theory, considering its allowance for maximum variance (Creswell, 2007, p. 290). The final analysis was the exploration of different possible patterns towards specific variables.

The transcriptions were sent back to the participants, as a guarantee of the quality of the transcription so we can assure that the message received is the one that was transmitted. No changes were made to the final results. Preliminary results of the study were also sent to the participants (Ferreira et al., 2010 a,b), and no special considerations were made. The final results incorporate the discussion and evolution of the results through the analysis of three researchers. In order to reduce a large quantity of data and provide an integrated frame of analysis, some of our results and discussion is presented in tabular form and the critical dimensions are discussed in the text (see Truss (2009) for similar procedures).

Results

The next figure illustrates the final template of the themes “Context Conditions”, “Trigger Conditions” “Implementation Strategies” and “Factors that difficult implementation” organized according to sub-themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. The results will be described with concerns towards the organizational contexts following a “vertical analysis”. Regarding “Factors that difficult implementation” the results will be described in a “horizontal analysis”. This theme is not part of the narrative that is used in each organization towards the description of the process. This theme also is described in its own narrative, which is more coherent and clearly perceived in an “horizontal analysis”. The initial template suffered modifications along the process. Some categories remained, others were eliminated or re-organized within new themes.

The description of results follows a process approach and intends to highlight the most relevant categories of the final template that emerged within each organization. Several categories did not appear in all organizations, which is coherent with the narrative description presented, as different organizations have different HR implementation processes.

Table nº 3: Final Template

HR implementation process	
Context conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Organizational structure HR function Role and Power HR function competence Polítical interference
Trigger conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government policies Strategy/ Mission Business Indicators Other organizational models Informal/formal reflections of the data Employees feedback
Implementation Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship of the HR function with the employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Proximity Empathy Negotiation Justice perception Organizational trust Relationship with line managers Time Top Example Preparation for change Pilot projects Alignment of the system Utility of the system
Factors that difficult implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional relational difficulties between directors, line managers and employees Lack of strategy History Communication Government Policies High load of the administrative function

Public Sector: City Councils

In organizations coded as O3 and O4 the human resource function role is described as an administrative function “*the strength of the organizational model that we have, does not allow much more than just payroll. Therefore, the services are limited to the payroll processing and the organization of one or two occasional trainings*” CF O4. Both organizations do not have an HR Department formalized and the function is located inside the Finance/Administrative Department. This department is below the political top management, which centralizes power. The function has a high administrative and technical dimension and a low strategic dimension. Power and autonomy are perceived as low. Both finance chiefs states that it would be important that the HR function became more strategic “*Ideally we could think about the organization (...) programing (...) have a more proactive management rather than reactive, as it happens now. But this implied having another structure and another organization, that we do not have*” CF O4. “*Therefore, it is not yet possible. I'm an activist of workplace training and assessment. This is something we should do*” CF O3. For this to happen, these subjects argue that structure should change, recognizing the existence of an autonomous HR department, and increasing their power “*It is the foundation, it is the basis of everything. The first thing that X did was to change the structure of the City Councils. He created a macro structure, everything started there. Everything started there, it begins to define functions, powers and duties of the services*” CF O4. The people who work in the HR function have low competence skills on HRM “*Well, now we have there one technical, with a degree in human resources which is still learning...*” Top manager O3. They consider HR competence relevant towards the development of strategic development.

Power emerges as an important dimension in the definition of the role and influence of HR function. Both organizations are public. They are strongly formalized with a rigid hierarchy, the functions are standardized and the power is concentrated in the top. However, their perception towards the function and its role is different, despite the strong organizational similarities between

both organizations. Both Administrative/Finance Chiefs perceive their power as low, however in O3, the power is totally concentrated in the top. This top manager describes himself as an autocratic politician that concentrates power and does not delegate. The top manager describes his own responsibility for the implementation of the organizational processes, ignoring the HR function *“He is a good person, great guy. But this goes fast, too fast for him (...)”* *“There wasn’t a boss here... we restructured. Services were hierarchized, a new organogram(...) I will not go to the head of the division...I speak directly to the line manager because I know he has the answer”* Top manager 3 *“We do not have autonomy.. I’ve been struggling with this. We do not have access to information”*. CF O3 In this organization the HR processes are becoming even more centralized in the top *“In the setting of the objectives we have to be much more ... I cannot leave it in the hands of management”* Top management O3. In organization 4, the power is also concentrated on the top, however this top manager does not intend to centralize all decisions *“I delegated skills... and I always give political coverage, even if I think that decisions were badly taken, if I trust him, it is also my duty to provide cover for decisions that came from that element”* Top management O4. This is confirmed by the Finance Chief, as he describes that he doesn’t have the power to make decisions, however he can influence the top manager which is opened to suggestions *“We have no decision-making power. We have the ability to influence, but we have no ability to decide”* CF O4.

In city councils top managers are politicians. This political dimension emerged from the data as an important factor that influences HR function. The influence is different in different organizations. In organization 3 there is an effort towards the total centralization. On organization 4 this centralization is not described. However HR function describes influences by the political dimension specially related to financial budgets *“Directly or indirectly... but there is a very strong indirect influence. However in this case I think it's just a matter of scheduling and control the expense”* CF O4.

To sum up, HR system modification and HR implementation process in City Councils depends on government's policies "*We gave training, even to the workers. Our job is to train and inform*" CF O3. HR implementation process can be determined by government's policies; however some specific initiatives could be decided and implemented by HR function "*This comes from central government, which transferred a package of skills to the cameras. But, for example, this new idea... this was here*" CF O4. In O3 the top manager centralized the implementation processes of HR change. He searched for other organizations where the implementation has been successful to learn and use the same strategies, if possible "*I came, I knew what I wanted. I started organizing the services, seeing what should be done. I went to other City Councils and saw how they worked.*" Top manager O3. No social exchange mechanisms are referred in this organization as part of the organizational decision making process. No role for organizational trust was described.

HR implementation process of change is described differently in this two City Councils. In organization 3, the process had line managers resistance. It was described as an autocratic implementation, without the presence of a previous involvement of line management "*There was a resistance towards change, but that's natural. Younger employees adhered more than the older ones to this process. I talked to the managers on that Tuesday morning.*" Top manager 3. No evaluation criteria of the effectiveness of the system were described. In organization 4 social exchange trades are described. The process of change was negotiated with employees "*I think that the objectives have to be negotiated, not impose. For example, in the "SIADAP" process it took me two days to negotiate with a colleague, her objectives to 2009*" CF O4. The relationship of HR Department with employees is of major concern to HR function. This is worked on a daily basis "*There are some who come here and say they will ask for a medical certificate to solve problems of a personal nature and have no other solution but ... they came here, they talk openly with me, look I have a problem so I have to solve this , but I have to miss work, because I do not have more vacations...They talk to me "* CF O4. In the relationship established with employees it is described as relevant to have clear

communication with feedback *"They have the right to question and it is good that they question. And even make me suggestions to help."* CF O4. The top manager of organization 4 confirms the relevance of social exchange mechanisms on organizational change, focusing on the relevance of relationship established with employees *"When I see that there is the possibility of some discomfort, I try to meet with people and talk to them clearly ... If there is a problem I give them all the explanations they need immediately"* Top manager 4. The top management is open to suggestions and to discuss alternatives in the implementation *"Usually people say that we need to make a decision, to see this and to see that and then I study ..."* Top manager 4. The system is assessed through surveys evaluation.

Another relevant indicator that appeared in organization 4 was a special consideration for employees perceived justice *"We do it quickly, so there weren't disparities. Right now everything is equal"* CF O4. Also, time was relevant in implementation. The importance of HR implementation being made in a progressive process over time *"and people were adapting themselves ... then they already wanted to learn new things"* CF O4.

Private sector: Industries

Organization 1 belongs to a multinational group. HR function is described with reduced power *"There is a whole set of definitions and processes defined at the central management level"* HR Dir.O1. The strategic involvement of the function is low. The HR change is defined by the European central administration of the group *"Decentralization is oriented towards implementation. There is a central structure that already has a number of definitions, but the implementation initiative is the responsibility of the various locations"* HR Dir.O1. HR function is below the administration, has an HR Department formalized with a HR Director. It has 20 agents directly and is decentralized in line managers. It has a high technical dimension and a low strategic dimension *"Performance evaluation is clearly defined by the central structure "* HR Dir.O1. In organization 1

HR system changes accordingly to the determinations of the global European system of systematic improvement that is the basis for the management of the multinational group. The European central management of the group has determined an increase in the standardization of all implementation processes *“We are seeing a greater intervention at the central level on these processes. In a situation where it was left up to of each organization when and how to implement the processes, now we are seeing an increase on the standardization of perspective, a widespread implementation, as a mean to ensure consistency in all these processes. This is clear.”* HR Director O1. The HR system uses satisfaction assessed by surveys as an indicator of employees adjustment towards the policies. Also, several informal meetings take place with suggestions of improvement that came from employees. *“Employees’ surveys, where we gather some information that is useful ... department meetings, where issues are raised in an open and constructive way. Informal question-answer sessions made by management, in which people can raise issues, questions, suggestions...Also a formalized suggestions program where people are free to offer suggestions for improvement in all areas”* HR Director O1. These indicators have a reduced impact in the transformation of the system. Social exchange mechanisms are not mentioned in the HR implementation process.

Organization 5 is an industry that doesn’t belong to a multinational group. It works on the international market, exporting most of the production to the USA. HR function is described with high power *“It's all a matter of common sense and to manage expectations. In the place where I am, and in the context where I am, what I can make. And I do not define alone. A HR manager has to define his work constantly with his Administration... The HR Department is the only direction that depends directly on the Chairman of the Board of Directors. There is a very close link on definition of strategies”* HR Dir.O5. The function has 4 executioners, is located bellow the administration, has a HR Department formalized with a HR Director. This HR function is decentralized in line managers. It is perceived has a high technical and high strategic dimension *“Both. There are technical activities that have to be maintained, the payroll processing, all other activities of training*

coordination, social services such as health and safety and the canteen. There is a great connection to the business, great participation at the strategic level of the business, which means there is a gradually approach, there is not a shock.” HR Dir.O5

The function is totally responsible for the definition and implementation of new politics. She describes her influence as high, close to people and with the responsibility to translate and negotiate the policies with employees, with great concerns about proximity *“And then you have to know to do likewise down and sideways. When there is common sense, ability to listen and understand and then translate the various languages and many different ways, because people are different, the realities are different, and we must have this ability to perceive the needs of people, fields and groups and make the necessary translations down .”* HR Dir.O5

Considering organization 5 the HR system changes accordingly to the organization's mission, strategy *“There is a long-term mission. We have a medium and long term strategy and the HR policies are well defined. Strategies depend on the market and on what we want”* HR Director O5. The HR system also changes according to government determinations *“The first was a reduction of 40 hours. The government defined”* HR Director 5. A formal reflection on the system is carried out frequently by HR function and Directors of other departments *“Regarding recruitment we do a reflection every two years on what should be the future of the company. Every year people make a reflection on training considering in the following years. The system performance evaluation is reviewed and defined according to the directors”*.

Time in the implementation also appeared in this industry as a factor that the HR function considers in the process *“If we apply things regarding only the law... and now everyone does... Only those who are not in business think that things happen this way. And so, we go and apply... we see the reactions, we measure the sensibilities and see...”*HR Dir. 5. The management of situations has

to be made daily and it is important to adjust solutions “*We have a very unpredictable situation and we adjust at very short-term solutions. Manage in a very short term*” HR Director 5.

Preparation for HR change is important and made through formal and informal processes. Meetings and discussions with line managers before change, the involvement of line managers and directors in change are essential in the process “*It's a great relationship. I hear them, I try to understand their difficulties, I am concerned with processes ... The role of middle managers is critical*” HR Dir. 5. For this HR Director it is relevant to be close to people, to have an organization-wide involvement and to communicate clearly, so the “organization” understands the need to change “*When the measures appear, they are no news to anyone. We've talked to people, they are already prepared, things have been talked, then everyone knows. People are already prepared, there is proximity, no conversation ... And we will do so, when all is ready, ok so we put up on the wall. But it is not new to anyone. We do not cause a reaction of surprise or a negative reaction*”. HR Dir. 5 The importance of the HR relationship with employees is felt by the HR Director as the main factor that enables the development of effective change in the HR system. This relationship is based on daily negotiation, proximity to people and effective communication, especially when processes are difficult to implement “*The decision negotiation process, the decision-making process in downsizing. We cannot say these are peaceful situations because they are processes with very strong emotional charge. When you can reach this state of ... despite all the complicated process ... is extremely positive. It takes a daily commitment and negotiation*” HR Dir. 5. This HR Director argues that is essential to prepare people to HR change with close communication and sharing of factors that lead to change “*When we need to explain something that is bad... When things are clear, defined, when we do not create false expectations, because the harder it is to manage people's expectations so there aren't moments of great tension... There has to be sharing, dialogue, sharing of situations, difficulties ... all because if expectations are well managed, the less explanations we have to give*” HR Dir. 5.

This close relationship is described and felt by HR Director as crucial to the development of people and towards and effective implementation of change *“Talk to people is one of those things that I do not let anyone to do for myself”* HR Dir. 5. One aspect that the HR Director 5 felt important to emphasize was the absence of retaliation when employees demonstrate they are against the measures *“when people are addressed is always possible to agree with me or not and if they do not agree, they do not agree. And here there is no retaliation”*. HR Director 5. This is relevant and brings about the described relevance of professional relationships based on fairness, truth and trust.

Private sector: Services

Organization 2 is a high technology developer with Portuguese capital that works internationally with offices in Europe, Africa and South Europe. HR function is described with high power *“What we don't do is our fault, because the path is open and you are welcome. Here we are right at the limit, what we do not do is our responsibility. These companies usually have to work hard and human resources have many power, but here, here I cannot complain that I had not the power to do this is”* HR Dir2. The function has 5 executioners, is located below the administration and has a HR Department formalized with a HR Director. The function is decentralized in line managers through the standardization of processes on digital platforms *“We are doing this in all our human resources processes. We have the platform and everything that the country managers want to do, they do. They only have to fulfill those steps. We have access to the tool here, what they do, we see here”* HR Dir2. The function is totally responsible for new HR politics definition and implementation in Portugal and abroad. This function is perceived as having a high technical and high strategic dimension. In organization 2 the HR system changes considering the organization's strategy. According to the HR Director, the HR system should be changed considering people's nature, their expectations and reactions towards the practices. She gives an example that might help in understanding her concern with employees, the performance evaluation implementation. It was stopped until viable alternatives are found, due to the employees reaction *“Nobody likes to be judged,*

to be put to the test, be put to the test in its essence, because it seems we are evaluating the person. People feel that and superiors also feel that. Then it disrupts because of it" HR Director 2. This HR Director sustains the relevance of a close relationship between HR department and employees to understand their perceptions and reactions towards HRM *"I think for us it's easy to understand why people do not adhere. People have their reasons, sometimes it is just necessary to put ourselves in their place"*. HR Director 2. She stresses the importance of mobilizing people towards the HR processes and towards the implementation of change, *"Nothing in our life depends only on us, so it is necessary to mobilize people. And from HR manager it depends very little, but we have to deal with that. "* HR Director 2

This HR Director argues that justice perception is relevant to build strong relationships in organizations *"This ruins the motivation...no one resists to injustice. If we put ourselves in the place of another that has no goals defined and reaches the end of the semester and his chief is angry because the person has lack of initiative, well.... well, this is devastating. I think it's devastating towards relationships in organizations"* HR Director 2.

The HR Director, also reported the relevance of top example in HR implementation process as they influence employees adherence *"Meanwhile the administrators began to leave: "Hello? And everyone thought: What is this? Even the administration enters?"* HR Director 2.

Relationships in organizations are described as an essential factor of growth and organizational development. This relevance of individuals and their unique individual characteristics as determinants of organizational competitiveness are described by this HR Director *"In other companies the machines work and people help. If it was there Manel, ok, and if it wasn't t ok also...and then he was replaced by Francisco ... no problem. These leaders also contribute to failure. Here we do not do this."* HR Director 2. An essential factor in the implementation of change, in this organization, is empathy, described as the ability to put ourselves in others people place,

followed by competence *“We do not put ourselves in other people’s places. What could have been a positive thing, resulted in a tremendous failure. We try to be creative and we made the wrong questions. The message was wrong”* HR Director 2. A HR competence is important, especially in this case to work on the alignment within HR processes *“it also means that there is alignment, alignment is also developed here”* HR Director 2. It is relevant, for this HR Director, that part of HR Department objectives are the result of other departments’ results. This formalizes the importance of the HR function to other sections, as it increases the responsibility of HR function organizational results *“And it was good, it was good that I have proposed, even for me, because I started worrying about the departments that affect my average. And I thought, well, I got to do something here, because the average of this department does not rise”*. HR Director 2 Line managers and directors are relevant elements in the process and are involved on implementation. *“I usually tell the managers that it is important that people find that 80% of their time here is very nice, very good, 80% is almost everything. They have to really enjoy being here. Otherwise they go away”* HR Director 2.

In this case, the function has high power, and HR Function sees itself as directly responsible for all the organization. This interpretation appears to have impact in the HR system implementation of changes. In this organization the HR function has a strong power and a focus on the relevance of developing of social exchange trades and relational processes. The modification of HR system happens considering the mission and the organizational strategy, but also the individual adjustment and wellbeing. The focus is on the development of individuals and the system changes accordingly to the perceptions of the HR function based on the perceptions of the individual needs.

Organization 6, is a large organization in the retail and distribution with Portuguese capital that is internationalized with offices in Europe and Africa. HR function is described with high power *“Since I’m here, I have always been involved in strategic decisions of the company. This is also a factor that binds me to the company. We know the strategic lines of the company every year. Our opinion is heard and has an impact on the decision. I have strategic lines”* HR partner O6. The

function has 14 executioners, is located below the administration, has a HR Department formalized with a HR Partner and a HR Director. The organization had the function centralized and now is decentralized in line managers. The decentralization happened has a way to increase responsibility towards the line managers *“First is a mission that added responsibility. Usually the bosses are the main stakeholders in this process. The adding of another responsibilities in managing people, was read as very interesting and positive”*. HR partner O6. *“We insure the training and the ongoing monitoring, in recruitment and selection, always working in partnership and we were always supportive”* HR partner O6. This function is perceived as having a high technical and high strategic dimension. The function is totally responsible for the definition and implementation of new politics in Portugal and abroad.

In organization 6, the HR function is a function of shared services. The suggestions to modify the implemented system come from the human resources department and from the business sector. Different business indicators are considered in the decision *“Sales, growing, productivity, internationalization. This only happens because they recognize that HR leverages the business. In this context of difficult decisions, how to tackle the economic context in which we live and how to boost business in Spain and Portugal, we follow with them. HR is developed close to business...We are close with business. Proximity is what allows the mutual understanding”* HR Director 6. The HR department is seen by the Business Sector as a function that empowers employees; therefore the relationship between the two departments is close and the position as well as the strategic decisions of HR function are relevant. The implementation of modifications in the HR system is made, often, under the direct recommendation of Business Sector. There is a strong involvement of Directors and line managers in the decision making process. The implementation process begins with the involvement of these policy makers and with negotiation *“We work listening. We listen to people, what they expect, we negotiate, we discuss, so we can sell our point of view. We are partners, business partners”* HR Partner 6 and with pilot projects in order to test the changes that will be

implemented and collect valid feedback *“We have to measure if this has impact in results. We decided to conduct a pilot training program in one country region to understand its impact on teams and then compare with another region. We collect all the feedback”* HR Partner 6. The involvement process of organization-wide is relevant *“The involvement by the parties, because one of the things that characterizes the organization is to involve everyone in the decision making. The involvement in the discussion prior to implementation”* HR Partner 6.

The HR function also seeks information in another organizations where the measures to be implemented are already working and are recognized as successful *“It borne with a visit to Y, when we buy it and I realize how the training model works and I want to import it”* HR Partner 6.

Also the top example has a crucial role *“The company believes that the example is extremely important. It's one of our values. Not always the leader leads by example. The leader should be an example and a reference for learning”* HR Partner 6. The implementation process is followed closely through the relationship established between the HR function and the line managers *“We can only reach people through middle management”* HR Partner 6.

Considering all preceding factors, the relationship based on social exchange between HR function and employees is enhanced in implementation process *“The closeness of relationship is very important, even more if there isn't physical proximity... we have lots of geographical dispersion, and if there isn't proximity in the relationship, the tendency is for you to make decisions based on wrong assumptions”*. HR Partner 6. It is relevant to communicate effectively with people, anticipating employees expectations and engage employees since the beginning *“The practices implementation results of previous processes of communication and involvement; therefore they aren't new to people”* HR Director 6.

There is also a major concerns with the alignment of HR practices so the message passed to the employees is clear and unique *“we only can do it if the communication process is fluid, if all*

processes are aligned, if the values I pass in a leadership academy, are related to the values of Recruitment and Selection, and if I have the profile into account on performance evaluation. “ HR Partner 6.

Factors that difficult Human Resource implementation processes

The HR implementation processes can be unsuccessful. It is also important to understand these difficulties on processes of change.

In City Councils different factors emerged, considering differences in the same structures related to top leadership styles, that impacts HR power. So, in O3 difficulties in HR implementation process were attributed by top management to political related dimensions such as loyalty *“I am accused by some of being...we have a President that is a dictator”* Top management O3. *This is most common in low level workers. When there are internal changes and when there are elections...It’s a terrible year. It is local administration problem. In the central administration this does not happen”* CF O3. Implementation in O3 also is described with serious difficulties in relationship with directors, line managers and employees *“there is always some resistance. There was some resistance by some managers...”* Top manager O3. The lack of HR power is perceived as a serious difficulty towards HR implementation *“We do not have the autonomy to manage from here to there”* CF O3.

Moving to private sector, especially to organizations with HR strategy, the strategy triggers the development of change in HR systems. If it is badly defined, such as in the public sector, it is perceived as a serious difficult, as it doesn’t allow to structure HR intervention *“I think the problem here is also the fact of not having a strategy. Who shouts more is the first that is rescued”* CF O4.

Space conditions are also difficulties in HR change. In organization 4 the finance Chief suggests the existence of adequate physical settings where they could receive and talk to people *“We should have a service oriented to employees, that are the internal customers of the organization. We*

should have a proper space to meet. We should have a day to provide clarification ... with this reform of public administration, people were a bit displaced" CF O4.

Also the administrative load has a negative impact in the development of strategies towards human resource development. *"(...) and that's what I told the President, I can only apply the SIADAP (the performance evaluation of employees), monitoring and writing reports, if I only do SIADAP..."* CF O4. Problems related to HR competence are also described *"With these people we cannot do more"* CF O4 as factors that restrain HR function and the services that it can provide.

In organization 1 difficulties in implementation are attributed to low power of the function followed *"We've been here over a year working on this matter. At some point we say, let's stop? Let's stop doing what we think it's correct? Obviously not. But increases the frustration"* CF O3. Also in this organization individual and unexplained factors are described associated with external contingencies, government determinations and union trades *"Conjunctural factors, bad generalized disposition for any reason, and then people respond more negatively. And now we are going through a particularly difficult moment because we are making a transition on the collective contract and it is being complicated. And there had been strike"* HR Director O1.

Organizations 2, 5 and 6 have similar arguments towards the failure of implementation of change. They describe difficulties in informal and formal communication process *"It was very difficult to get the message out clearly for everyone"* HR Director 6 *"Perhaps we have here an opportunity for internal development, the communication process... things are already happening, before the issue is formalized and communicated, is already happening. This is a common idea. We do not communicate well. Formal communication is the worse."* HR Partner O6.

The definition of government policies is also a factor that destabilizes organizations. These modifications bring conflict and confusion to the organization *"Government defines by not defining and this creates a great difficulty because when things are not clear.... It was a complicated period,*

associated with great conflict. It was a national issue, a complicated process and had its repercussions, with strikes associated' HR Director 6

These Directors also recognized the relevance of history and culture in difficulties associated with implementation *"It shocked me that people didn't understand it. And what did I do? I kept the program in electronics and we will now see this impact in business. But I was disappointed...It did not have the adherence than I expected... It has to do with history. "A" was the first to specialize and for a long time they heard strong critiques regarding its behavioral competences on customer service and sales. It was with the HR system that they found the opportunity to leverage and this is recognized. The electronics recognize today, and in a very explicit way that training has a huge contribution in sales leverage"* HR Partner 6. Different historic assumptions developed different perceptions on organizations towards the importance of HR system and this impacts the implementation of new processes of change. Organization 1 did not identify factors that could interfere in the process.

Discussion

In this paper we explore how organizations decide to change and implement HR processes. The objective is to comprehend HR implementation process and the associated factors, specially the role of organizational trust.

HR Implementation Process

Our most relevant findings suggest the existence of different patterns of HR implementation in the same organizational structures (e.g. city councils, large industries). Our results suggest that regardless of the similar settings, HR function can lead to unique solutions that have impact in the development of different patterns of HR implementation processes.

We begin this discussion following the final template. Leadership, organizational structure, strategy, political interference and competence of HR function seem to be context conditions that determine the organizational role and power of HR function, its autonomy and influence in organizations' development.

Several authors have debated differences between public and private sector (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). In this particular research, a relevant result is that we found on public sector similar structures, similar HR functional role and political dimensions that interfere in HR implementation. However we also found in private sector the same rigid structures with low strategic definition of HR function. These results support the findings by Truss (2009) that encountered differences between public sectors organizations considering HR role and influence. Kessler et al. (2000) developed a study on public sector organizations and concluded that the HR function design is particularly sensitive to the upstream decisions. Our data show us that this is not only a public sector issue, as the private sector also showed that the HR functional role and influence is clearly dependent on the power of the HR function. This power is a direct consequence of organizational structure and leadership.

Leadership has a determinant role in the strategic development of the function. Stanton, Young, Bartram and Leggat (2010) conducted an exploratory study and explored the strength of the HR system on a case study research, studying how HRM is understood and operationalized across the management hierarchy in Australian hospitals. Our results are consistent with their findings that suggest that the role of the CEO is crucial in providing HR legitimacy, leadership and resources that create a distinctive HR system. The senior manager needs to translate consistent HR messages throughout the management hierarchy, support and empowerment to operationalized HR strategy and empower the function.

One of the most relevant results of this research is that if we consider organizational structure, organizations revealed differences that weren't expected. As we compare bureaucracies, as city

councils or large industries we found that the HR function can lead to different implementation patterns. This is a new and relevant result suggesting that similar organizations, concerning sector, product and structure can have different implementation processes. Mintzberg (1970, 1995) described the public services and large industries as bureaucratic machines with the power centralized in top management with very low autonomy. We found these structures functioned as expected, however the role and influence of HR is distinct, depending on the top management's leadership perception of what the nature of the function should be (in public) and the organizations strategy (in private). Our results suggest that mechanistic structures, in spite of their central concern with the standardization of interactions, do not rule out concerns with the development of social exchange mechanisms as implementation strategies.

These context definitions have impact in HR trigger conditions for systems' change and on implementation strategies. Six types of trigger conditions emerged from the data: government policies; strategy/mission, business indicators, other organizational models as well as informal or formal reflections of the system and employees feedback. These triggers seem to act on decision making of HR implementation process and they differ according to context conditions.

On public sector with rigid organizational structures and low HR function power, principal triggers seem to be government policies with a special concern with the observation of other public organizational models (Kessler, 2003). Our findings suggest that on private sector the process seem to depend mainly on government policies, strategy/mission, business indicators and other organizational models. In these type of processes the HR change seems to be considered a routine.

However on private sector, when the power is high and the function has more competence, the same triggers above mentioned seem to be considered. However there are additional factors as informal/formal reflections of the system considering employees feedback. This informal and formal reflections of the system are conducted regularly based on employees feedback and incorporated in

the decision making process of the manager. Our findings suggest that on these types of processes the HR change seems to be considered strategic and crucial.

Another relevant result of this exploratory study are implementation strategies that are used by HR function to prepare employees to change and reduce the impact of change: the relevance of social exchange trades (Whitener, 2001). Relationship with employees is described as integrating communication, proximity, empathy, negotiation, justice perception and organizational trust. Relationship with line managers, time, top example, preparation for change, pilot projects and alignment of the system are also factors considered as relevant. Our data suggest that, in machine bureaucracies when the power of HR function was reduced, the strategies considered in the implementation were preparation for change and the top example. Also in the machine bureaucracies but when the power of the function was higher, the strategies considered were time, top example, preparation for change and relationship with employees through communication, negotiation and justice perception. Also the relationship with line managers (that is described as the “*arms of the function*” HR partner 6) is relevant as a way to assure that HR message reaches the employees and the implementation decors as planned. These results confirm the relevance of the social exchange trades but also the relevance of the political influence by the HR function towards the organization (Ferris & Judge, 1991).

Considering factors that difficult implementation our data suggest that difficulties in the implementation process are associated especially with HR function with low power. Also, the absence of a clear organizational strategy, unplanned government measures, the historical burden of the organization, a large administrative load and a formal structure that doesn't formalize the importance of the function are mentioned. This lack of formalization and lack of strategy leads to poor work conditions which does not enable the development of the HR function. These results are consistent with work by (Veloso, 2008; Truss, 2009a, 2009b).

It is relevant to discuss the factor that is described as the most relevant in the implementation process, when the HR function has power, the relationship established organization-wide between the HR function and employees. To sum up, data suggest that in HR implementation of change, social exchange mechanisms are present when the function has power and sophisticated competence on HRM. The social relations in the organization based on clear communication processes, the importance of being close to people, the capacity to negotiate and mobilize line managers and employees also was stated as crucial in the development of the HR influence and confirms the work by Korsgaard et al. (2002) *"Nothing in our life depends only on us, so it is necessary to mobilize people, the objectives are very complex because they do not depend on us, because some parts do and others don't."* HR Director 2 *"My role is to be very close to the people. We must lead by example and we need to help"* HR Director 2. These results confirm previous studies on the relevance of HR political influence (Ferris & Judge, 1991; Keating, 2007; Truss, 2009a).

This research adds information to the literature which focus on the HRM implementation processes as it brings comprehensive and descriptive insight in to process (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). This research confirms the work by Whitener (1997), Cropanzano et al., (1997) Korsgaard et al. (2002), Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2003), Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), Gould-Williams and Davies (2005) and finally Levin, Whitener and Cross (2006) which sustained the relevance of social exchange trades in the organizations. This close and phenomenological relationship is developed by HR function through formal and informal processes with the presence of time as a factor that must be considered in the development of the relationship. Time is a factor that also Truss (2009) found as relevant in the perceived role of the function and in the process of development of HR solutions in organizations. This strategic dimension confirms the social exchange theories as HR function works the reciprocity norm, of social exchange theory, through the development of a close relationship with employees, possibly in an effort to provide indicators of organizations involvement towards their employees (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998b). HR function can use social

exchange trades in order to establish good relations with employees that will enhance their cooperative behavior and increase competitiveness (Korsgaard et al., 2002; Whitener et al., 1998a). Alfes et al (2010) discusses the significance of managing union trades' relationships with HR function as a HR- related task, especially within a change process, such as downsizing processes. They consider these relationships as a HR-task. Our findings suggest the relevance of HR function-employee's relations as a strategic task of HR-function.

Another possible explanation based on trust, is that this close relationship can also work on the involvement of employees preparing them for change, possibly acting as buffer in the risk control (Mayer et al., 1995; Schoorman et al., 2007), especially when processes are difficult to implement. This relationship, in which HR function integrates organizational trust, apparently works as a psychological mechanism that manages employees' expectations towards change and constitutes an antecedent of employees' decision making process towards change.

One relevant result of this research is that interactions in organizations are described as a significant factor of individual and organizational development. The influence of employees reaction on the decision making process of change, and the concern with the maintenance of these interactions varies across organizations. These interactions seem to be relevant when HR function has influence and is responsible for the processes implementation. The relevance of interactions in HR implementation processes seems to increase as a HR autonomy increases. This result can be discussed focused on the strategic role of HR function and its own leadership style. Past research also has argued that the strategic role of the function can be object of the agent himself (Guest & King, 2004, Wright, McMachan, McCormick & Sherman, 1998, Judge & Ferris, 1992). When HR Director was a leader responsible for all employees organization-wide, this was a strategic feature that changed HR implementation process. The importance of social exchange mechanisms and a cooperative culture with the HR system aligned between strategy and employees is clear. We can discuss whether this is a feature of the agent himself, and it is true that in these HR directors with

higher autonomy, we found a mobilizing speech, focused on relations as the basis to decide about change, and its implementation as a way to increase employees' adjustment to the policies. The cause and effect in these matters are not easily distinguished however this self-perception appears to come from the power designed to the function and this strategic role changes the strategies of HR implementation organization-wide.

Truss (2002) also discusses the relevance of actions towards the increment of the strategic role of HR function through what she describes as “credibility-building on the part of HR department members” (p.719). This dimension can be directly related to our findings, with the dimension that we called the relationship between HR function and employees. Our result confirms this and adds to the literature as the initial idea by Truss was the relationship between HR and line managers. Our results show the relevance that HR function gives to strategic relationship organization-wide and not only with line managers.

Organizational Trust

The role of organizational trust is a specific objective of this research. The exploration of the role of trust brought new findings, as we found that HR function integrates within the relationship with employees, trust. We can debate whether theoretically trust is within relationship with employees, but the descriptions made by HR function were clear. The role of organizational trust in the literature is being described as relevant in diminishing the risk perception and enhancing the control on relationships (Das & Teng, 2004; Das & Teng, 1998; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Other authors have argued that trust can be used strategically by managers in order to promote adjustment towards change in HR process and consequently competitive advantage (Korsgaard et al., 2002; Whitener et al., 1998; Whitener, 1997, 2001).

This study presents relevant findings that suggest that the development of trust and its relevance on HR implementation processes are related to HR power. Our findings suggest that there

are organizations in which trust is not relevant in HR implementation processes. It appears that organizational trust exists and it's perceived as relevant in organizations as the power on HR function increases. In organizations where HR function was in a clear power position, organization-wide trust was an important criterion for monitoring change episodes. This is consistent with Abell (1996) that presents differences considering helping or cooperative cultures in organizations versus competitive cultures. As the organization grows the informal culture of trust depends on the formalization of the "culture of trust". Only in the smallest organizations everybody will be connected to everybody else. So, our findings suggest that if the formal culture does not recognize the formal role of HR function, trust isn't relevant in HR implementation processes. Trust depends as Abell (1996) argues on the formalization of the "culture of trust".

We interpret our findings according to what appears to be three distinguished patterns. The same structures have different patterns of implementation. Analyzing trust especially, in bureaucracies where the HR function has no power, organizational trust do not appears in HR implementation process *"I think we have the habit of not trusting. So I think that by principle do not trust people. It is proper to us. Not only in this institution but it is proper to us"* line manager 2 O3.

In bureaucracies where HR function has reduced power, organizational trust appears relevant in their own teams. Several authors have discussed the relevance of trust in teams (Costa et. al, 2001; Mach, Dolan, & Tzafrir, 2010; Mayer & Schoorman, 1998; Roe, 2001; Spector & Jones, 2004). These findings appear to confirm this relevance, especially in this case in the HR team *"I trust in all the people who work with me directly. In terms of delegation of tasks what I could delegate I did... As a matter of technical trust. Personal trust is other issue. But technical trust, trust in abilities, and because I know they are people who would be able, if necessary, to replace me. Are people that have technical skills"* Chief finance O4. It is relevant to highlight that these HR agents with low organizational power highlight the trust based on competence. They also enhance the importance of control this trust as it cannot brings risk into relationships *"At first maybe we should be more*

controllers but then start giving people more freedom to act. We discuss the main lines and people know what they have to do and usually do it well and with a fairly high degree of autonomy. So trust is important. Without trust there can be no independence or at least autonomy. There is always a risk associated with trust But my experience in the past tells me that it is possible to manage” HR Director O1.

In organizations (including bureaucracies) where HR function has high power, our findings suggest that there is an emphasis on building trust organization-wide, not just on their team directly. We suggest that this can be explained by their increase in responsibility towards the entire organization. Possibly the perception of team of these HR managers changes from their direct teams to “organization-wide team” *“It's crucial and decisive. That's what we all expect from each other. It is not me or them. It's all together. And this change in narrative between us and them, we and you, this dichotomy that exists in the narrative is often difficult to overcome, unless when you actually need, we're all here. That is what creates trust. It is important that behaviors can be visible on both sides and that is what people see, and it is that, that generates trust. Speeches are not are attitudes. Is what I see and what other people see of me that generates trust”* HR Director O5. Trust continues to appear as relevant in the management of their own teams, but in this case also in managing all organization, acting as an buffer towards the perceived risk of change inherent to HR implementation processes *“Trust is always a fundamental interconnection between people. It is not static. Trust is systematically undermined and questioned with our reactions and our attitudes... We do not say everything... We do not say all the what we think. Therefore, there is a lot of wrong and wright perceptions and especially when we are in time of great complexity and difficulties we're all looking at each other trying to understand what's behind those attitudes, or if we can maintain the level of high trust”* HR Director 5.

To sum up, our findings seem to show that context conditions are relevant variables on HR implementation process, as they determine the process itself. Considering these arguments we seek

relevant information that could add information to the definition of possible organizational patterns that bring clearness to the role of trust in the HR implementation process. The data were re-analyzed regarding Mintzbergs' work (1979, 1995). The following table is a result of a third analysis of our data, considering the discussion presented earlier. The first column concerns Mintzbergs' work about structures. The following three columns (Power of HR function, Relationship of HR function with employees and Organizational trust) is our development based on his theory and on our findings.

Table n° 4: HR implementation processes

Organizational structure	Power of the HR function	Relationship of the HR function with employees	Organizational trust
<p>O1 Machine bureaucracy</p> <p>Prime coordinating mechanism: Standardization of work processes</p> <p>Decentralization: Limited horizontal decentralization</p>	<p>Reduced power in modification and implementation of changes in HR system. Located at Techno-structure, support staff and operating core</p>	<p>Formal relationships with space to interpersonal relationships</p> <p>Communication flow: Top down</p>	<p>Development of trust on specific teams</p> <p>HR managers develop organizational trust in their teams: tasks delegation, risk incentive</p> <p>No role for trust on the modification of the system</p>
<p>O2 Adhocracy</p> <p>Prime coordinating mechanism: Mutual adjustment</p> <p>Decentralization: Selective decentralization</p>	<p>High power in modification and implementation of changes in HR system</p> <p>Located at Strategic apex</p>	<p>Relationships are essential and are stimulated</p> <p>Communication: Top down and bottom up</p>	<p>Space to the development of trust</p> <p>Trust is relevant in Organization-wide</p>
<p>O3 Machine bureaucracy</p> <p>Prime coordinating mechanism: Standardization of work processes</p> <p>Tending to Centralization</p> <p>Decentralization: Limited horizontal decentralization tending to vertical and horizontal centralization</p>	<p>No power in modification and implementation processes</p> <p>Located at the support staff</p>	<p>Formal relationships protected by the standardization of work processes with no relational indication present</p> <p>Communication: Top down rigid and formal</p>	<p>It doesn't develop. Trust is only described as negative and always as non-existing.</p> <p>No role for trust on the modification of the system</p>
<p>O4 Machine bureaucracy</p> <p>Prime coordinating mechanism: Standardization of work processes</p> <p>Decentralization: Limited horizontal decentralization</p>	<p>Reduced power in modification and implementation processes</p> <p>Located at Techno-structure, support staff and operating core</p>	<p>Formal relationships with space to interpersonal relationships</p> <p>Communication: Top down negotiated</p>	<p>Development of trust on specific teams</p> <p>HR managers develop organizational trust in their teams: tasks delegation, risk incentive.</p> <p>No role for trust in the modification of the system</p>

Table n°4 (cont.)

Organizational structure	Power of the HR function	Relationship of the HR function with employees	Organizational trust
<p>O5 Machine bureaucracy Prime coordinating mechanism: Standardization of work processes</p> <p>Decentralization: Limited horizontal decentralization</p>	<p>High power in modification and implementation of changes in HR system</p> <p>Located at the Strategic Apex</p>	<p>Relationships are essential and are stimulated</p> <p>Communication: Top down and bottom up</p>	<p>Development of trust</p> <p>Trust is relevant organization-wide</p>
<p>O6 Divisionalized form Prime coordinating mechanism: Standardization of outputs</p> <p>Decentralization: Limited vertical decentralization</p>	<p>High power in modification and implementation of changes in HR system</p> <p>Located at the Strategic apex</p>	<p>Relationships are essential and are stimulated</p> <p>Communication: Top down and bottom up</p>	<p>Development of trust</p> <p>Trust is relevant organization wide</p>

Our data appear to suggest the emergence of three different patterns of the HR implementation processes, regardless of the same structural organization. We selected to further analyze machine bureaucracies as these are the structures which show clearly different implementation processes on the same structures. In this analysis we integrated HR function power, the implementation strategies, relationship of the HR function with employees, communication and organizational trust.

Table n°5: Three differentiated patterns of HR implementation processes and roles for organizational trust on machine bureaucracies

Organizational structure	Power of the HR function	Relationship of the HR function with employees	Organizational trust
Machine bureaucracy	No power in modification of implementation processes Located at the support staff	Formal relationships protected by the standardization of work processes with no relational indicators present Communication: Top down rigid and formal	It doesn't develop. Trust is only described as negative and always as non-existing. No role for trust on HR implementation process.
Machine bureaucracy	Reduced power in modification of implementation of changes in HR system. Located at Techno-structure, support staff and operating core	Formal relationships Communication: Top down negotiated	Development of trust on specific teams HR managers develop organizational trust in their teams: tasks delegation, risk incentive. No role for trust on HR implementation process.
Machine bureaucracy	High power in modification and implementation of changes in HR system Located at the Strategic Apex	Formal and informal relationships are essential and are stimulated Communication: Top down and bottom up	Development of trust Trust is relevant organization-wide. Trust is relevant on HR implementation process.

It should be emphasized however, that “*as presented, each configuration is idealized – a simplification, really a caricature of reality. No real organization is ever exactly like any of them, although some do come remarkably close, while others seem to reflect combinations of them, sometimes in transition from one to another*” (Mintzberg, Quinn & Goshal, 1995, pp. 371). Our results appear to add relevant new developments to previous works that suggest that in similar settings the HR departments will tend towards similar solutions and unique organizational resolutions (Kessler et al, 2000). Our findings appear to go against these previous assumptions and they seem to confirm the results found by Truss (2009). She found that the role played by the HR function can be better explained by a combination of organizational factors, such as isomorphic factors, strategic choice, social capital and co-evolution (why and how HR functions evolve).

In our findings bureaucracies show different implementation processes and they suggest, that regardless of the similar settings, our findings suggest that HR functions can lead to unique solutions in organizations.

Limitations and future research

A limitation of this study was not to consider aspects in the organizational development such as its size or culture. It is relevant that future studies focus on other aspects, different from the ones focused on this work that could reveal more detail about the process itself.

Future research should consider the role of HR relationship with employees on studies regarding their own perception. It is relevant to understand if this dimension described by HR function is clearly perceived by employees, as it is by HR managers, and if it can be integrated in part of their perception of Human Resource Management System. Also, future studies should consider the role of trust on employees and not on managers, and its relationship with perception HRMS is relevant. Future studies should focus on quantitative research as a methodology that enables a confirmatory approach (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). The use of different methodologies is an effective path to develop stronger theory (Shah & Corley, 2006).

Conclusion

To sum up, our research highlights the value of social exchange theory and specifically direct interactions between HR agents and employees. In our findings organizations show different implementation processes and they suggest, regardless of the similar settings (e.g. bureaucracies), that HR functions can lead to different paths in HR implementation processes.

Data supported the role of the HR function, associated with its formal and perceived strategic dimension, in building social exchange mechanisms, through direct interaction with employees and line managers. Our findings suggest that HR function uses the norm of reciprocity of social exchange

theory (Cropanzano et al., 1997; Whitener et al., 1998) in order to work the employees' collaborative relationship in an effort to prepare them to change.

Also, our results suggest that as HR function increases its power and works organization-wide, organizational trust assumes relevance in HR implementation processes. Our findings suggest that if the formal culture does not recognize the formal role of HR function, trust isn't relevant in HR implementation processes. Trust depends as Abell (1996) argues on the formalization of the "culture of trust".

The most effective implementation processes appear to consider employees as its principal final concern and object of work. The focus of these successful implementations is on workers' development. In these cases the system changes accordingly to the perceptions of HR function based on their perceptions of workers' or organization needs, through what can be called an "*organic*" process (Veloso, 2008). Our results suggest that it is strategically relevant that HR function has high power but also that keeps close interactions with employees and line managers "*to be strategic (...) HR must remember its operational activities*" (Teo & Rodwell, 2007, p. 265).

“Some writers in this field have bemoaned the amount of space wasted debating the nature of HRM. It might have been wasted only in the sense that the issue has not been resolved. Maybe to maintain progress it is time to go back to the drawing board and take another hard look at the theory.” (Guest, 2001, p 1105)

Capítulo II

**Perceptions of Human Resource Management System: theoretical and empirical
development of Bowen and Ostroffs' Model**

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Abstract

This study presents research on individuals' perception of human resource management system (HRMS), building on Bowen and Ostroff (2004). The empirical tests on the model have provided information about the importance of further theoretical and empirical development. Gomes, Coelho, Correia, & Cunha (2010) found evidence for the main dimensions of the model, however they found difficulties in the definition of the attributes that integrate the model and the relationships between them. Previous qualitative work (Ferreira, Keating, Silva, 2010 a,b) suggested that perceived relationship between HR function and employees could be a relevant dimension in employees' perception of the HRM system. This relationship is relevant, strategic and it's built by HR function based on proximity, communication and support. These interactions between the HR agents and employees are relevant and may lead to generalizations about the HRMS. This relationship is restrained and built in a specific work setting with unique organizational factors, such as organizational structure and culture, HR policies and procedures (Whitener et al., 1998b). Therefore it is relevant to consider as attributes of this dimension not only communication, proximity and support but also the perception of performance of the HR Department and the perceived utility of the HRM system.

The theoretical model was empirically tested on 21 organizations in Portugal. We collected 1369 valid responses from employees, managers and line managers. We performed a Principal

Component Analysis and reliability measures. We suggest that individuals build perceptions on HRMS based on 1. The relationship with HR representatives: relationship and competence (consistency); 2. The perceived effects of the HRMS: comprehensibility, utility, visibility and distributive justice (distinctiveness and consensus).

KEY-WORDS: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, HUMAN RESOURCE RELATIONSHIP WITH EMPLOYEES, PROCESS BASED APPROACH

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Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) has been discussed theoretically, beginning with the difficulty in defining HRM, what is its meaning, its content and its specific utility (Storey, 1995).

Several studies confirm the empirical relation of HRM with crucial organizational outcomes such as competitiveness and performance (Huselid, 1995; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Wright, Gardner & Moynihan, 2003; Gould-Williams, 2003; Becker & Huselid, 2006; Combs, Yongmei, Hall & Ketchen, 2006; Sun, Aryee & Law, 2007; Guest & Conway, 2011) commitment (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Whitener, 2001), turnover (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003), turnover rates (Cho et al, 2006) ISO certification in small and medium enterprises (Cassel et al., 2002; Renuka e Venkateshwara, 2006) psychological contract (Guest & Conway, 1999; Pathak et al., 2005) customer satisfaction (Rogg, Schmidt, Schull & Schimdt, 2001) employees well-being (Baptiste, 2008) and employees organizational satisfaction (Edgar & Geare, 2005).

There is a shift from micro to macro level of analysis (Delery & Doty, 1996), with the research considering the process based approach (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Bosalie et al. (2005) stress the need for a global perspective on the impact of HRM since the micro-studies on specific outcomes (such as performance, a practice individually) tend to lose sight of HRM as a global system (Wright & Boswell, 2002). The difficulty to obtain reasonable samples and to relate data with these differences and complexity at an empirical and theoretical level explain, at least in part, difficulties in research. The difficult replication of the object of study (Bosalie, Dietz & Boon, 2005) combined with difficulties on measurement (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Guest, 2001) have contributed to the difficult clarification of HR impact.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the development of knowledge on HRM based on individuals' perception about HRM system. The process based approach is different from the content approach as it focus on defining metafeatures that can create strong situations, strong HRM systems,

that enables the construction of shared meanings (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). In this approach there are few empirical researches. Sanders, Dorenbosch and Reuver, (2008) tested the impact of HRM individual perceptions on commitment. Their work present data that partially support the importance of distinctiveness and consistency of the system on commitment but not consensus. Guest and Conway (2011) also didn't find consensus as relevant in higher performance. Gomes et al. (2010) found results that partially support the model. Li, Frenkel and Sanders (2011) showed the importance of the model on chinese employees' attitudes, however their results are not totally explained by the original model. They discuss the need to develop the model in order to integrate social relationships. They consider that the tested model was simple and maybe it could gain with the incorporation of social exchange theory in future model building (p. 1837). Considering these recent findings in the literature, stated above, important advances were made, however, it seems that Bowen and Ostroff's model continue to need more empirical studies in order to continue its development.

The social exchange theory is relevant as it brings about the relevance of interactions in organizations, specially if we consider human resource management systems. A previous qualitative study (Ferreira, Keating, Silva, 2010) and previous work on social exchange theory (Whitener, 2001; Whitener et al., 1998) argues the relevance of the relationship between employees and managers as dimensions that can influence employees' perception of human resource management system.

In the understanding of Human Resource Management system, Bowen and Ostroff (2004) discusses the relevance of employees response. The Human Resource (HR) models can be perceived as useless or unwanted (Boudreau, 1998) and this is relevant in what can be employees' perception of HRM system.

This paper intends to develop the perception of the construct "HRMS Perception" initialized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), by integrating the importance of HR function relationship with employees and the perceived utility. Both dimensions will be discussed below.

Bowen and Ostroff's model intends to explain the individual attribution process. In order to understand the attribution process it is relevant to assess if the theoretical dimensions of the model that are perceived clearly by individuals in order to make an attribution. This article does not intend to measure individuals' attribution. The methodology and measures are adequate to measure attitudes and not attributions. Therefore, this research intends to use measures on attitudes to understand the underlying construct "human resource system perception".

The objectives of this research are: 1. Comprehend how individuals perceive the HRM system; 1.1. Theoretically integrate HR relationship with employees and perceived utility of HR system in the construct of HRM perception; 1.2. Present an empirical validation of the construct (HRM perception).

The content based approach

The content based approach is based on the existence of a set of practices that are effective in all contexts, and integrates works specially from the universalistic perspective (e.g. Tzafrir, 2005). It is defined by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) as "*the individual practices and policies intended to achieve a particular objective. The content of the HR system refers to the set of practices adopted*" (pp. 206).

Delery and Doty (1996) distinguished between three theoretical perspectives to think about HR practices and their relationship with organizational processes: universalistic perspective (Gould-Williams, 2003; Huselid, 1995), contingency perspective (Schuler & Jackson, 1987) and configurational perspective (Dany, Guedri & Hatt, 2008). Delery and Doty (1996) tested the three models, universalistic, contingency, and configurationally in a study with HR and top managers at the bank industry in USA. Their results show support for the universalistic perspective as having an effect on performance.

Concerning the literature on best practices, Gould-Williams (2003) conducted a study with local authorities in Wales with 191 workers, supervisors and managers where he found support for the hypothesis that universalistic HR practices predict superior organizational performance. He used “1) *employment security*, 2) *selective hiring*, 3) *teamworking*, 4) *performance-related pay*, 5) *training and development*, 6) *egalitarianism* and 7) *information sharing*” (pp.30).

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) focus on a process based approach, however they also discuss the importance of HR system content to be articulated and adequate to organizations reality. Therefore, in this study, we also had special concerns with the specific practices to be included in the metafeatures that assess the process. The practices included were seven human resource practices considered universalistic, with special considerations about their use on portuguese reality (Cabral-Cardoso, 2004; Veloso, 2008, Almeida, 2009). We assessed socialization, recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, administrative processes, communication (information sharing), training and teamwork.

The process based approach

Due to difficulties of unraveling the link between specific organizational results and individual's perception of the HRM system, there is a growing interest in the literature with the processes by which the HRMS operate, especially after the theoretical model proposed by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). Some empirical work has been developed on the model (Sanders, Dorenbosch & Reuver, 2008; Gomes et al., 2010; Guest & Conway, 2011; Li et al., 2011; Delmotte, Winne & Sels, 2012; Pereira & Gomes, 2012). This research intends to continue the theoretical development and empirical validation in this area.

The model proposed by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) is based on social psychology, namely the work on attribution (Kelley, 1973). According to the previous authors the effect of HRM practices on performance cannot be only through content of the HRMS but especially through psychological

processes. Bowen and Ostroff started with a contingency perspective developing from here to a process based approach that focus on the importance of metafeatures of a HR system that build a “stronger” organizational climate, with shared meanings and interpretations about HR system.

This model presents a new psychological approach in the individual HRM perception of the system. It considers the attribution process in the individuals’ perception of the HR system. This development brings individual interpretations into the research agenda demonstrating the relevance of psychological and subjective processes in the HRM research. According to the authors, there is a strategic need for the organization to find a way to transmit the same message to all employees. According to the model, individuals will perceive the same message from the HR system if the HRMS is consistent, consensual and distinct among other organizational systems and/or functions. These three dimensions will build a coherent message that is perceived the same way among employees.

This model, which adapts the initial Kelley’s theory, defines that individuals make *cause – effect attributions depending on the degree of distinctiveness (“the event effect is highly observable”), consistency (“the event effect presents itself the same across modalities and time), and consensus (there is agreement among individuals ‘views of event-effect relationship”)* (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004, p. 208). Distinctiveness is divided in four attributes: Visibility (of the HRM practices), Comprehensibility (of the HRM practices), Legitimacy of authority (of the system and its agents, the HR function) and Relevance (importance of the system towards personal and organizational goals). Consistency has three attributes: Instrumentality (of the HR system, a perceived cause-effect relationship between the system and individual consequences, like incentives or rewards.), Validity (consistency between the stated objective of the system and the day to day routine) and Consistent HRM messages. According to Bowen and Ostroff this dimension has to be present 1. between stated messages and real organizational measures, 2. Between the HR practices themselves, 3. and over

time. Finally the third dimension is Consensus and it has two attributes: Agreement among principal HRM decision makers and Fairness (distributive, procedural and interactional).

The relevance of studying HRM within these meta-features (process based approach), rather than the content of practices itself (content approach) brings new ideas within the research area, as it focuses on the processes rather than content. This psychological model with a concern with the individual attribution and with individual behaviors constitutes a development that integrates psychological processes into HRM research. It focuses on the strength of the situation to promote convergence among employees' external attributions towards the HR system. Bowen and Ostroffs' work brings to organizations reality the detail within individual and psychological processes.

Development of the research model

Based on previous qualitative work (Ferreira, Keating, Silva, 2010) and previous work on social exchange theory (Whitener et al.,1998; Whitener, 2001) the actual relationship between employees and the human resource function is a factor influencing employees' perception of the human resource management system.

Can we separate the perception of HRMS from the agents that work on it? When looking for the causes of behavior, individuals base their attributions on situation characteristics, person characteristics and object characteristics (Kelley, 1973). Kelley argues that when faced with a behavior that has high distinctiveness, high consistency and high consensus, individuals tend to attribute this behavior to features of the object itself (external attribution) and not to specific person characteristics (internal attribution). Bowen and Ostroff (2004) focus on these principles to explain individual attributes concerning HRMS and subsequent behavior of employees.

However when the context does not have this coherence and does not display high distinctiveness, high consistency and high consensus it can create ambiguity in the individual

attribution, as the behavior becomes less informative regarding responsibility for the event (Korsgaard, Brodt & Whitener, 2002, p. 313) Therefore the literature has studied attributions to managerial behavior, when the context is not totally clear (Korsgaard et al., 2002).

In social exchange theory one of the main assumptions is that individuals react to the behavior of others through a reciprocal response, the norm of reciprocity. This is one of Blau's (1964) central assumptions, the constant mutuality of attitudes and behaviors in a professional relationship, positive or negative. In the organizational context Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner (1998) highlight the role played by the manager as the initiator of positive behaviors at work. These authors argue that the ability of manager to initiate positive social exchanges through positive behaviors, empowerment, recognition and investment in employees' personal ability enables the employee to develop positive reciprocal responses, more favorable towards their professional relationship with the manager.

Considering these researches which have their base on social exchange theory, Ferreira, Keating and Silva (2010 a,b) conducted previous qualitative work on HR implementation processes, which lead to findings considering HR function and their managerial behavior. Findings suggested that the HR function worked strategically on a relationship towards employees as a factor that intends to promote adjustment and reduce the negative impact of change in HR implementation process. According to HR function this relationship interferes in employees' perception about HR system. HR function highlights this relationship in all changes, but it is perceived as particularly relevant when changes of HR system are difficult and/or hard to understand by employees.

Relational dimensions within organizations are difficult to measure and understand. Empirically, there is not enough research about the immediate, psychological relationships between employees and managers for a clear picture to emerge. These relationships are built in an organizational frame with power differences, are temporally complex and interpretative (Keating, 2007). Therefore we assume it is relevant to consider as elements of the relationship between HR function and employees, not just open communication and demonstrating concern for employees as

Korsgaard et al. (2002) suggested, but also employees' perceived competence of the HR function and perceived utility of the HRM system. There is not enough specific research about HR competence. However there are few studies that bring about the relevance of HR competencies in the perceived effectiveness of the HR function (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson & Younger, 1995), the relevance of HR knowledge in organizational performance (Tyson, 1999) and the HR competence as relevant towards strategic integration (Teo & Rodwell, 2007). The literature on organizational trust gives some inputs in the understanding of managerial relationship with employees, which can be integrated in this research. Mayer, Davis & Schoorman (1995) model of trust comprehends competence as an antecedent that leads to trust. Keating, Silva & Veloso (2010) tested Mayer, Davis & Schoorman (1995) model of organizational trust based on the scale of Mayer & Gavin (2005) that assesses trust between employee and manager. Their findings demonstrate that ability is the stronger predictor of organizational trust. These studies are relevant as they show that interpersonal and close relationships within organizations can be especially sensitive to HR competence.

Perceived utility

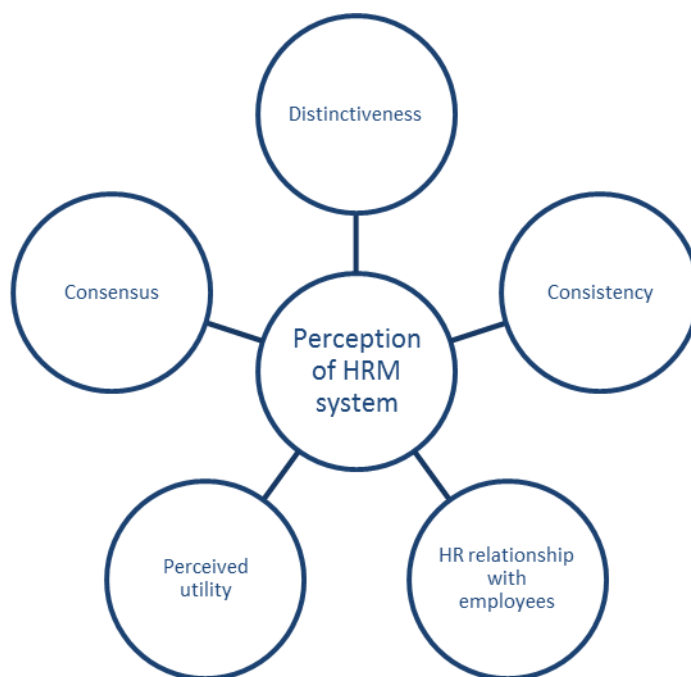
Until now, published research has neglected employees' perception of the utility of Human Resource Management system. Quantitative studies often ask about the presence or absence of the practices without considering the possibility that employees can evaluate the system as a poor system (Guest & Conway, 2011) or even as useless. Edgar & Geare (2005) conducted a study in order to understand the perceived importance of Human Resources system made by employees and managers. Their results show that it cannot be assumed that employees have the same view of the importance of the HR system as the HR managers or the top managers. The HR models used in the organizations can be perceived as unwanted (Boudreau, 1998) and this has an important impact that cannot be minimized and should be controlled.

In sum, we assume that employees' perception of their relationship with HR agents is relevant in the attribution towards the HRM system. This dimension can interfere in employees' perception of the HR system as considering its impact in the modification of employees perception of the HR system (Ferreira et al., 2010). Therefore, we assume that these interactions may lead to generalizations about the HRMS and are relevant in attribution towards the HR system.

Until now, to our knowledge, no research has been made about the perceived utility of HRM System. We intend to overcome this gap.

The next figure represents the research model of the study.

Figure nº 1: Research Model



Research design

Bowen and Ostroffs' model intends to explain the individual attribution process. In order to understand the attribution process it is relevant to assess if the theoretical dimensions of the model are perceived clearly by individuals in order to make an attribution. This article does not intend to measure individuals' attribution. The methodology and measures are adequate to measure attitudes and not attributions. Therefore, this research intends to use measures on attitudes to understand perceptions about the human resource system.

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) strongly call for the importance of developing measures to assess the human resources system, gathering data from the employees themselves. "*The appropriate unit of measurement of assessing strength is the individual, since employee attributions and perceptions reside in the individual* (p. 216). In previous empirical researches the respondents tend to be managers (Ichniowski, 1990; Huselid, 1995; Huselid and Becker, 1995). Other several authors have focused the importance of measuring the employees perception directly (Boudreau, 1998; Meyer & Smith, 2000; Gould-Williams, 2003; Edgar & Geare, 2005; Gould-Williams & Mohamed, 2010) however until now, there is not enough research. The focus of the research is on employees response. However we also measure line managers and HR agents responses considering the relevance of multiple evaluators in order to provide a full understanding of the construct under evaluation (Tsui, 1990).

Procedure and sample

The sample was defined with the specific goal of covering the largest range of organizations possible from all sectors and sizes, with a specific criterion: the HR function should be differentiated, with the existence of a HR department that all employees recognize. We followed the directions by Keating (2003), Cabral-Cardoso (2004), Veloso (2008) and Almeida (2009) and regarding the HR function in Portugal and its degree of formalization.

This study is part of a research project which started with a qualitative plan. The objective now is to explore in large samples and multiple contexts the dimensions under test (Searle & Dietz, 2012). The data were collected in 21 organizations in Portugal. These included nine public sector organizations and twelve private sector companies. The nine public sector organizations included four public sector administration agencies, four city councils and one school. The private sector companies included four industries (beverage, powertrain and automotive suppliers) three services provider (consultancy and information services) one nonprofit organization, one construction company and three schools.

The organizations were contacted through a formal request to senior managers. We had online or local meetings with the HR senior manager in order to describe the requirements to participate in the study. The organizations were informed about the goals of the research and the degree of data confidentiality. A survey facilitator was identified in each establishment, typically located in the HR department, and provided with guidance on how to distribute the surveys. Only one organization allowed the collection of data by the researcher herself. In order to overcome this obstacle in the effective response rate, each organization was sent a pack of questionnaires in paper and an online link. The paper questionnaire was delivered by the facilitator to workers who had no access to a computer workstation. This survey was delivered with an envelope addressed to the research team in order to assure the confidentiality of data. The workers who had access to a computer in the organization, were sent by email a link to an online version of the survey, guaranteeing anonymity.

We sent a total of 4078 questionnaires and online links and received 1677 responses, with a response rate by organization between 5 and 100 per cent. The mean was 39.20 per cent of response rate. 308 questionnaires received were not used due to responses with high missings or due to non variability on the responses (all the responses on the same rating at the scale). We collected a total of 1369 valid surveys.

Table n° 1: *Sample Characterization based on quantitative variables*

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	40.15	9.99
Seniority	12.80	11.08
Number of subordinates (a)	24.32	16.42
Seniority in management (a)	2.90	1.78

a. Only managers answered this question. N=209

Table n°2: *Sample characterization based on qualitative variables*

		Frequencies	Percentage
Sex	Male	582	42.7
	Female	781	57.3
Educational	4th grade	91	6.7
Qualifications	6th grade	71	5.2
	9 th grade	177	13.0
	12 th grade	410	30.0
	Bachelor	105	7.7
	Graduation	485	35.5
	Masters	26	1.9
	PhD	1	0.1
Contract type	Permanent	862	75.9
	Fixed-term	204	18.0
	Temporary	68	6.0
	Other	2	0.2
Manager	Yes	209	18.4
	No	926	81.6
Training in HR (a)	Yes	133	62.1
	No	81	37.9
Public vs private sector	Public	457	34.4
	Private	872	65.6
Industry vs Services Sector	Industry	602	45.3
	Services	727	54.7

a. Only managers answered this question. N= 209

Measures

Human Resource Department Relationship perception – Five items were developed and written based on previous qualitative work (Ferreira, Keating, Silva, & Veloso, 2010a; Ferreira, Keating, & Silva, 2010b) that focus on communication and proximity as the foundation for the relationship between HR function and employees. Also the work by Korsgaard et al. (2002) and Whitener et al., (1998b) was considered. They emphasized open communication and demonstration of concern for employees as the main relevant factors in the managerial-employee relationship. Five items were developed. Each item is responded on a Likert scale with 6 points, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: “The Human Resources Department helps me to solve problems.”).

Human Resource Department Competence perception - Three items were translated and adapted based on Teo and Rodwell, (2007) (which is based on Wright et. al, 1998). Each item is responded on a Likert scale with 6 points, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: “The department seems to keep informed about the best HRM practices that are used in other organizations”).

Perceived utility of the HRM System: Seven items were used to assess perception of the utility of the HRM system. Each item used as referent one identifiable human resource practice (socialization, recruitment and selection, training, performance appraisal, administrative procedures, communication, and teamwork).

The selected practices were based on the work by Gould-Williams and Mohamed (2010) and Whitener (2001) with special concerns on Portuguese organizations reality, specially the high administrative load of HR function and the lack of well implemented reward systems (Keating, 2003; Cabral-Cardoso, 2004; Veloso, 2008 and Almeida, 2009). The practices evaluated were socialization, recruitment and selection, training, performance appraisal, administrative procedures,

communication, and teamwork. Each item is responded on 5 points Likert scale, where 1 = it is never useful and 5 = extremely useful (Item example: “The performance evaluation is useful”).

Human Resource System Perception: Distinctiveness, Consensus and Consistency - We used an adaptation of the HRMS Questionnaire (HRMQS), an instrument built by Coelho, Cunha, Gomes & Correia (2011). In its original version the HRMSQ, included 42 items that assessed three metafeatures of Bowen and Ostroffs’ model: distinctiveness, consistency and consensus.

The next table shows the evaluated meta-features studied in this research, the respective attributes and the items of our instrument that correspond to each attribute.

Table nº3: *Meta-features of the model, attribute, items and items example*

Meta-features	Attributes	Items	Items example
Distinctiveness	Legitimacy	Item 1, 8, 19	“Item 1: Management considers Human Resource Management practices important”
	Relevance	Item 2, 14, 20	“Item 2: Human Resource Management practices contribute to the achievement of employees’ personal objectives”
	Comprehensibility	Subscale comprehensibility	“Indicate the degree to which you comprehend the way performance evaluation is applied in your organization?”
Consensus	Visibility	Subscale visibility	“Indicate the degree to which you think performance evaluation is visible in your organization”
	Agreement among	Item 6, 12, 18, 24	“Item 6: All managers follow the

	HRM decision-makers		Human Resource Department guidelines”.
	Fairness	Item 7, 13, 25	“Item 7: When deciding on the issues that concern me, my superiors seek to listen my opinion.”
Consistency	Instrumentality	Item 3, 9, 15, 21	“Item 3: Salary increases depend on the performance evaluation results”
	Validity	Item 4, 10, 16, 22	“Item 4: I feel that there is a relationship between what is appreciated in performance evaluation and what is done on a day-to-day basis”.
	Consistent Messages	HRM Item 5, 11, 17, 23	“Item 5: The objectives of performance evaluation, training, and other Human Resource Management practices are interrelated”

This final instrument was composed by 39 items. Each item is responded on a 6 points Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: “The existing reward system helps each employee to achieve greater success”).

We adapted this instrument based on the specific objectives of this research and results from a previous qualitative study (Ferreira, Keating, Silva, & Veloso, 2010a; Ferreira, Keating, & Silva, 2010b). We removed some items and adapted the human resource practices used as referents for the original items. We remove career and bonus and added socialization and administrative processes. These modifications were based on the reality of Portuguese organizations, specially the high administrative load of HR function and the lack of well implemented bonus systems (Almeida, 2009,

Cabral-Cardoso, 2004, Keating, 2003 and Veloso,2008). The practices evaluated were socialization, recruitment and selection, training, performance appraisal, administrative procedures, communication, and teamwork.

Our final instrument, with all the sub-scales integrated had 54 items.

Statistical Analysis Procedure

We followed Tabachnick and Fidell (1989), Hair, Anderson, Tatam and Black (1995), Stevens (2002) and Field (2009) and in the process of statistical analysis. Our goals were to develop a theory about the process underlying perceptions of the HRM system, through the analysis of correlation patterns and to develop valid measures in which the questionnaire was based. PCA and FA are two distinct statistical techniques (Hair, Anderson, Tatam & Black, 1995; Tinsley & Brown, 2000; Marôco, 2010) that can be used to this effect. In PCA all the variance is analyzed, in FA shared variance (covariance) is analyzed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989; Hair et al, 1995). According to our research goal we considered PCA a better choice, following Tabachnick and Fidell (1989), Hair, Anderson, Tatam & Black (1995), Stevens (2002) and Field (2009).

The data were analyzed for their suitability for principal component analysis with PASW–18. A PCA was conducted on the 54 items. Data were explored in order to maximize variance through orthogonal (rigid) rotation using Varimax method. Although theoretically all these factors are correlated in some manner, which would suggest the use of oblique rotations, empirically we wanted to increase the factor loadings so the interpretation could be more accurate and less ambiguous in terms of perceived dimensions of the system by the employees (Stevens, 2002; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, in order to test our data for significant differences in the analysis, assuming that our factors could be highly correlated and that this could influence our results we also conducted an

oblique rotation with the Oblimin method (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) with similar results. Following Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991, p. 615) we retained the results of the Varimax rotation.

In the first analysis we did not define the number of factors enabling the items to load on any number of factors (Stevens, 2002). Analyses were performed with the missing data and without them. Missings were replaced with the mean response for the variable in question, so that the sample size didn't become too small (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, in the reliability analysis we did not replace the missing values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). In all of the following analyses correlations were screened concerning singularity (variables that are perfectly correlated) and extreme multi-collinearity (variables with high correlations; $r \geq .8$) (Field, 2009). The Kayser-Meyer Olkin sampling statistic was adequate which indicates that the factor analysis procedures were appropriate. We consider the following arguments to retain the factors: the point of inflexion of the curve (Cattell, 1977) in a scree plot, in more than 200 participants (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989; Stevens, 2002). We also considered the substantive importance of factor loadings by Joliffe's (retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 0.7) (Field, 2009). However, the final decision was made over Kaiser's criterion of 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). In the interpretation of the factors we decide to use and a cutoff level of .45 (Stevens 2002; Field, 2009) and a 20% variance overlap between variable and factor (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Results

The sample size (N=1369) was adequate as Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggested a minimum of 300 cases for factor analysis as a general rule of thumb. The frequencies of each item were analyzed and the total range of the points of the scale was used in every item, proving the frequency of occurrence of different behaviors. Bartlett's test of sphericity relating to item interdependence was examined ($X^2_{(1431)}=39138.79$; $p<.001$) indicating that the correlations between

items were sufficiently large for PCA. The Kayser-Meyer Olkin sampling statistic was $KMO = .967$ which indicates that the principal component analysis procedures were appropriate.

An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each component in the data. Eight components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and explained 64.55% of the variance. The scree plot showed two points of inflexion that could indicate eight or twelve factors. The Jolliffe's criterion showed 15 factors. We followed Field's (2009) and according to the large sample size, the convergence of the scree plot and Kaiser's criterion, we retained eight components. The loadings of the items suggested the exclusion of the 12 items according to the following principles: Item 24 did not correlated with others ($r \leq .30$) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007); Item 25 did not meet the cutoff criterion of factorial loading ≥ 0.45 (Stevens 2002; Field, 2009); Items 1,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,16,18 had differences $\leq .2$ in the factorial loadings on different factors. In all of the following analysis all the remaining items showed good correlation with the total ($>.30$) and we did not find extreme multicollinearity. We subjected the remaining 42 items to another principal component analysis (PCA) following the same procedure as above. Bartlett's test of sphericity relating to item interdependence was examined ($X^2_{(903)}=35697.681$; $p<.001$) and the Kayser-Meyer Olkin sampling statistic was $KMO = .96$. Six components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and explained 64.04% of the variance. By Jolliffe's criterion of retaining factors we would retain 13 factors. This scree plot is less ambiguous than the first but also showed two points of inflexion that could indicate five or eight factors. The rotated component matrix showed all items distributed along 5 factors. We performed a new analysis on the data, in which we limited the number of factors to five. Bartlett's test of sphericity relating to item interdependence was examined ($X^2_{(820)}=34312$; $p<.001$) and the Kayser-Meyer Olkin sampling statistic was $KMO = .960$. Five components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and explained **63.24%** of the variance. The scree plot showed two points of inflexion that could indicate five or eight factors. We analyzed the rotated component matrix and the structure

was clearer. Items 2 and 7 were removed considering the cutoff (loading ≥ 0.45) (Field, 2009; Stevens 2002).

Factors interpretation

Table 4 shows the factor loadings after rotation of the remaining 40 items. The items that clustered on factor 1 suggest that it represents HR Relationship with employees, factor 2 represents Comprehensibility of the Practices, factor 3 represents Utility of the practices, factor 4 represents Visibility of the practices, factor 5 represents Distributive Justice. Factor 1, integrated the scale of HR relationship, HR Department competence and items related to the Consistency of the HRM system. As presented before, our definition of HR relationship with employees embraces the HR competence, therefore the factor can be called HR relationship with employees. Some items related to the consistency of the HRMS loaded on this factor (instrumentality and consistent hrm messages). This integration can be interpreted as the relevance of consistency (e.g. the importance of time) on the development of this relationship, stressing the importance of the tested relationship as an instrumental one and the relevance of communication in this relationship. Also, factors with highest loadings are the ones related to the instrumentality of the relationship, especially the resolution of problems and the availability to listen, which adds information to this interpretation. Factor 2 represents the comprehensibility of the practices and the items loaded as predicted, in one subscale. The item with highest loading is comprehensibility of recruitment and selection, followed by comprehensibility of the administrative procedures. Factor 3 represents the perceived utility of the practices and the items loaded as predicted, in one subscale. The item with the highest loading is the utility of communication (sharing information). Factor 4 represents the visibility of the practices and the items loaded as predicted, in one subscale. The item with the highest loading is socialization. Factor 5 is an unexpected factor and all factors have very similar loadings. It is specific, related only to distributive justice as all the items assess the relevance of outcomes of reward systems.

Table n° 4 Factor loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax rotation

	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
Socialization's Utility	.071	.185	.707	.189	.113
Recruitment & Selection Utility	.112	.197	.687	.125	.133
Performance evaluation Utility	.195	.122	.652	.130	.260
Training Utility	.085	.035	.760	.087	.046
Administrative procedures Utility	.206	.192	.662	.130	-.009
Communication(sharing information) Utility	.197	.145	.775	.180	-.027
Team work Utility	.132	.095	.767	.198	.000
Socialization's Visibility	.201	.215	.197	.697	.210
Recruitment & Selection's Visibility	.195	.260	.169	.681	.187
Performance evaluation Visibility	.264	.273	.223	.586	.253
Training Visibility	.220	.286	.210	.589	.175
Administrative procedures Visibility	.326	.297	.231	.577	.003
Communication(sharing information) Visibility	.380	.280	.212	.658	.057
Team work Visibility	.270	.216	.338	.607	.082
Socialization's Comprehensibility	.195	.692	.169	.295	.186
Recruitment & Selection's Comprehensibility	.216	.751	.151	.227	.197
Performance evaluation Comprehensibility	.280	.677	.134	.247	.237
Training Comprehensibility	.196	.736	.136	.204	.164
Administrative procedures Comprehensibility	.276	.746	.187	.170	.032
Communication(sharing information)Comprehensibility	.358	.707	.216	.255	.054
Team work Comprehensibility	.280	.604	.332	.279	.043
Salary increases depend on the performance appraisal results	.250	.083	.102	.154	.656
Employees who are rewarded are those who deserve.	.423	.215	.115	.135	.657
The existing reward system helps each employee to achieve greater success	.425	.144	.102	.185	.672
All employees know exactly when and what to do in order to receive a prize.	.343	.218	.024	.161	.656
The HRM practices are applied similarly in various departments	.576	.265	.134	.120	.295
The Human Resource Management practices are consistent over time	.628	.233	.142	.169	.290
The guidance provided by the HR Department is credible	.714	.270	.142	.131	.184
The HRM practices contribute to a high level of employees performance	.705	.217	.160	.138	.351
The HRM practices contribute to a good performance appraisal	.696	.216	.149	.153	.393

Table nº 4 (cont.)

There is a consistency between what the HR Department difuses and states, and then what it does and apply.	.641	.222	.115	.163	.276
All activities of HRM system complement themselves in order to reach the objectives of my employer.	.611	.176	.169	.038	.142
The HR department appears to be informed about the best practices that are used in other organizations.	.737	.138	.187	.151	.157
Our HR system is effective as to attract and retain competent employees.	.727	.133	.153	.190	.240
Our HR system is effective in developing skills among our employees.	.719	.126	.152	.175	.224
The HR Department was consistent with my expectations regarding the role and responsibilities of HR function	.764	.171	.181	.221	.207
The HR Department is available to listen to me whenever I need.	.784	.161	.087	.204	-.015
I feel that my opinions and suggestions are heard by the HR Department.	.773	.188	.098	.218	.073
The HR Department helps me solve problems.	.819	.147	.095	.224	.022
Normally the Human Resources Department tries to understand my opinion on the definition of new procedures.	.763	.157	.093	.243	.126
Eigenvalues	23.08	4.85	4.63	3.96	3.02
% of variance	.576	11.84	11.29	9.65	7.37

Note (N=1369); The items are presented in the order they were administrated to participants.1= HR Relationship with employees; 2=

Comprehensibility;3 = Utility; 4= Visibility; 5= Distributive Justice

Reliability analysis

Item-total correlations ranged between 0.44 and 0.83, and all items correlated with the total score. The item-item correlation ranged between 3.74 and 8.31. Each item contribution to Cronbach's alpha was examined and no item was removed. Cronbach's alpha coefficients and distribution data for each scale are presented in Tables 5 and 6 respectively.

Table nº 5: Cronbach's Alpha

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of participants	Nº of items
HR relationship with employees	.959	1246	15
Comprehensibility	.926	1112	7
Utility	.883	1089	7
Visibility	.903	1095	7
Distributive justice	.841	1335	4

Table n° 6: Means, minimum, maximum values and standard deviations

	Mean	Min	Max	Standard Deviation
	<i>M</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>SD</i>
HR relationship with employees	60.31	15.00	90.00	14.57
Comprehensibility	27.46	7.00	42.00	6.48
Utility	26.89	7.00	35.00	4.52
Visibility	27.65	7.00	42.00	5.80
Distributive justice	12.82	4.00	24.00	12.82

As expected, the results indicate the existence of significant correlations between all dimensions, $p \leq 0.001$. Table 7 presents Pearson's correlations. All correlations are above 0.30 and none of the correlations is greater than .8 (Field, 2009) which demonstrates the validity of the construct, and the relevance of each dimension towards the global construct. The correlation matrix shows that HR relationship with employees presents the highest pattern of correlations among the factors. This brings about its relevance in the construct. Visibility presents a high correlation with comprehensibility that is totally consistent with the theoretical frame, since both are presented as attributes of the same meta-features (distinctiveness). Utility has its highest correlation with visibility. Distributive justice has its highest correlation with HR relationship with employees. Theoretical implications of these findings are discussed further.

Table 7: Matrix of Pearson's correlation coefficient between dimensions

Dimension	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) HR relationship with employees	-			
(2) Comprehensibility	.612**	-		
(3) Utility	.482**	.525**	-	
(4) Visibility	.656**	.717**	.604**	-
(5) Distributive justice	.686**	.532**	.368**	.544**

Discussion

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) purpose a complex theoretical model to empirical assess and any simplistic effort to modify it is bound to be superficial or incomplete. In this study we start by summarizing the results of the factor analysis and then draw the theoretical implications of the underlying processes identified. We consider the model starting from a complementary theoretical frame, in which we introduce social exchange mechanisms, specifically the Relationship established between employees and HR department.

Evidence from reliability data

The total scale score proved to have good internal consistency for this sample. Our final data (40 item questionnaire) has good reliability on all assessed features and the total correlations composite seem to be working together and to be measuring the same underlying construct. The implication is that respondents understood the meaning of the items and mobilized similar representatives in order to answer them (Collins, 2003).

Evidence for Validity

These results provide support for adequate content validity. According to Byrne (1996) if a “*measure’s score are to be valid, it is essential that the content of its items be interpreted in the exactly the same way by all respondents.*” p. 41. The use of the practices adapted to the Portuguese reality reduced the discrepancies between organizations and promote content validity. The questionnaire was the same for all organizations and participants. One of the major concerns in the self-report studies is the comprehensibility of the message presented in the scale. We also had major concerns regarding the clarity of the items. The information required in the scale had to be clear to all respondents of all educational levels (Freire & Almeida, 2001). Limitations concerning the educational level were also screened. Educational level could have a negative impact because the wording of items might not be familiar to employees (e.g. HR strategy). We got around this difficulty by presenting the scale to the HR directors of the organization and asking them to assess the level of difficulty, objectivity and clarity of the questionnaire. After this we instructed the facilitators in the organization.

In all organizations we asked the human resource manager to test the questionnaire in a smaller group of employees with the lowest educational level in the organization, prior to general data collection. In one of the organizations where the researcher collected the data personally, the only difference detected in the respondents towards the response to the questionnaire was the response time. It was greater for respondents with lower academic qualifications. We also consider that the features related to utility, visibility and comprehensibility helped in this process, because they were objective and easily understood by employees. Our final sample includes 339 (24.9 %) participants with the 9th grade or below.

Previous empirical work based on the model of Bowen and Ostroff’s model had small sample size (Gomes et al., Ribeiro, Coelho & Gomes, 2011; Delmotte et al., 2012). Our results reflect data

from 1369 from 21 organizations. This large sample from different organizations, in different evolution stages of HRM system, increases the validity of the measure.

Theoretical developments

In this work it is not our intention to draw an explicit connection with performance. This study intends to clarify the construct of human resource management perceptions, developing Bowen and Ostroffs' theory of individual attribution processes, based on social exchange mechanisms concerning the HRM function.

Our findings show that individuals do not perceive clearly HRMS as it is defined by Bowen and Ostroff. The dimensions and the attributes of the model suffered modifications in the empirical proof. The first relevant finding in this research is this considerable difference between the theoretical metafeatures and attributes and the empirical dimensions found. Despite differences regarding empirical data and the theoretical model, we consider relevant an effort to discuss our results at the light of the model. Returning to the original model by Bowen and Ostroff and considering the three meta-features (distinctiveness, consistency and consensus) we consider that, despite the modifications that can be made to the model, it is also relevant to discuss our findings in an effort towards integration. In our data Distinctiveness appeared divided in two attribute, Comprehensibility and Visibility which explained 11.84% and 9.65 % of the variance. Legitimacy and Relevance did not appear in the final model. This result is consistent with previous research (Gomes et al., 2010; Li et al., 2011) in which distinctiveness appeared in the empirical analysis but not all of its attributes. Consistency, as defined by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) did not appeared as one distinct factor. However, the "HR relationship with employees" dimension integrated some items of consistency. We interpret these data according to the literature which focus on the importance of consistency (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; Teo & Rodwell, 2007) in order to perceive competence in others and establish social relations. Consistency can be understood at the light of social exchange theory. In an organizational relationship, social exchange mechanism are relevant

and are influenced by time (Whitener et al., 1998a). Possibly the relevance of relationships can determine that individuals make evaluations towards consistency within the relational dimension. Considering a practical example if individuals are evolved in social exchange trades this implies that agreements that are made today can be valid tomorrow. The findings suggest that consistency is relevant but it is understood by employees as part of the relational dimension.

Consensus in its original definition by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) did not appear. However, factor 5 emerged and it contains distributive justice which explained 7.37 % of the variance of the model. This result is sustained in the literature by the work of Delmotte et al. (2012) which defined the original attribute fairness by procedural justice and distributive justice. Although this was not our initial assumption, our data are clearly in agreement with their results.

Coming back to the idea that the dimensions and the attributes of the model suffered modifications in the empirical proof we can try to explained this by analyzing the individual's attribution on HRM at the light of Kelleys' original work (1973, 1980). Kelleys' original model is a normative model of attribution, almost prescriptive (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Kelley's objective was not to make a good descriptive model but an ideal one. Can we develop the HRMS perception using an attribution model? Can this attribution model be the basis of good measures? The Bowen and Ostroffs' model is the first, to our acknowledge, to use a psychological approach that intends to explain individuals behavior towards human resource system. This is relevant and brings about its complexity and difficulties found in previous empirical studies (Gomes et al., 2010) that intended to test the model.

It is relevant to continue developing in order to establish the psychological chain that can lead to individual's behavior in organizations. Based on Bowen and Ostroff's model and the work by Fiske and Taylor (1991) we theoretical develop the possible link between HRMS perception and its relevance towards employees' behavior regulations. This research intends to develop the model providing empirical analysis of which dimensions are clearly perceived by employees. It begins by

the Human Resource system sending messages that build employees perceptions. Perception is the first level that can lead to attribution. After perception employees build their attributions. These attributions are explored by employees through an hypothesis test. Hypothesis test assumes the use of behavior to test hypothesis about others (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). These hypothesis tests are about the causes of behavior and employees confirm these hypotheses on a daily basis, observing the HRM system. The hypotheses are influenced through a confirmatory bias, towards the attributions' confirmation. As consistency, consensus and distinctiveness of the system increases these employees hypothesis become more similar. This psychological process is also influenced in time and by social mechanisms of social conformity (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). The final outcome of this process can be the employees behavior regulations.

The behavior regulations can have achieved through the same attributions or causes for the behavior. However, in different organizations the individual attributions can be different, and the strength of the climates are different from organization to organization and within each one. The HRM model of high distinctiveness, high consistency and high consensus appears to be an ideal and prescriptive model. The HRMS object is complex, scattered and unique within each organization (Keating, 2007). Therefore, it appears that employees built their perceptions influenced not only on the system but also on the relationship established with the representatives of the HRM system. This idea leads to another relevant result of this research, the relevance of social exchange mechanisms concerning the HRM function.

The social exchange mechanisms concerning the HRM function were assessed through a new dimension which was called "HR relationship with employees". This research developed this new dimension and build a new scale, with good statistical results, that show that individuals understand this dimension and mobilized similar representatives in order to answer them (Collins, 2003). Perception is an automatic process (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) and perception towards a system is difficult to explain. A system is not an object neither a person. Can we assess and perceive HRM

systems for itself? Social exchange theory emphasizes the role of relationships (Blau, 1964) in the way humans perceive the social world. According to the attribution theory (Kelley, 1973, 1980) the individuals are actors interacting and they differ their attributions if there are changes in distinctiveness, consistency and consensus, but also considering differences regarding their focus on situational features or individual features. The importance of another person to focus our attention is central in the inter-personal attribution by Kelley. The extension of this model to human resources management, following our data, and our theoretical assumptions, must consider differences in the process of the attribution itself, especially considering not only situation features but also person characteristics, specially the person behavior as the original model states for.

Another relevant result of this research in the development of the construct “HRM perception” is the relevance of employees’ perception of utility of the HRM system. The development of this new dimension has been discussed as relevant in the literature (Boudreau, 1998; Edgar & Geare, 2005) but until now, to our acknowledge, it has not been integrated in this construct and no scale was developed. This new dimension, which assesses an evaluation of the practices by the employees, shows good statistical indicators and contributes to the construct validity. In our data **Utility** of human resource management practices appeared as an isolated factor with 11.29 % of total variance explained. Rethinking the original model by Bowen and Ostroff, utility of the human resources practices can be interpreted as the perceived relevance of the practices, but only in an individual level. If we remember the initial attributes by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), Relevance was an attribute of Distinctiveness, and it was defined as whether the individuals perceive the practices as relevant to organizational and individual goals. We theorize from here and suggest that individuals only are able to evaluate this concept in a more restricted and clear interpretation, its utility.

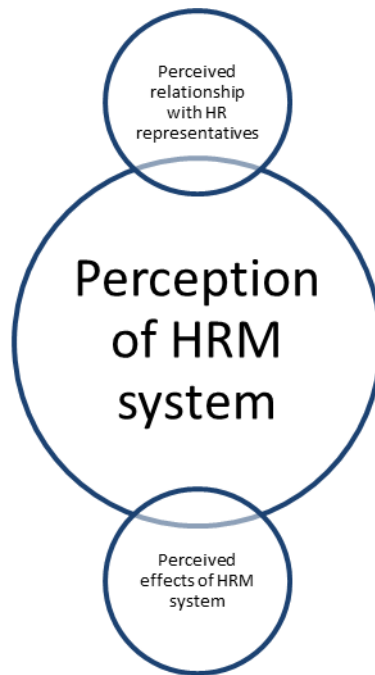
To sum up, our data suggest a modification of the model, with the assumption that the situation features, the HR strength (distinctiveness, consistency and consensus) could gain with the integration of representative relationship that seem to be crucial in the attribution process. The

development of attributions is a complex cognitive process; The HRMS can be abstract or diffuse, difficult to understand; therefore it is possible that individuals need to personalize on HR representatives in order to attribute. If we consider our findings, individuals reacted very well to the scale as they understood it clearly. It is relevant to refer that the scale doesn't reflect an emotionally based relationship but an instrumental relationship. Our data suggest that perception of the HR system, can only be totally perceived with the integration of social exchange mechanisms, as the HR relationship with employees.

Apparently subjects do not focus only on HRMS itself, but also on the people that represent the HRM system. The attributions development is a complex psychological process. Considering our findings perhaps individuals can continue to make attributions about people and not about objects. Fiske and Taylor (1991) argues that although subjects examine distinctiveness, consensus and consistency, their search is not systematic or mechanic. People *“sometimes choose to acquire information about the actor rather than the types of information suggested by the covariation model”* (p. 36).

This research has results that suggest the relevance of relational dimensions in the human resource management perception. However we do not consider this a final, closed construct. It is one step further in the development of the understanding of how individuals perceive HRM system.

In this research we tested perceptions, therefore, we suggest that individuals build perceptions on HRMS based on 1. The relationship with HR representatives: relationship and competence (consistency); 2. The perceived effects of the HRM system: comprehensibility, utility, visibility and distributive justice (distinctiveness and consensus).



Limitations and Future Researches

Several limitations are significant. The first is that we made a number of assumptions and decisions in order to conduct the analyses. Although we believe that we took the most logical and conservative decisions regarding the literature and the main objectives of the research, other arguments could be made for approaches different from our own. Second is that we do not have results towards predictive validity (gathering data later in time) (Byrne, 1996). It is important to recognize that the model needs to be tested in other contexts, since the cultural differences are important in perception (Rego & Cunha, 2010).

Our work is correlational and based on perception. Future studies, with the development of the model should consider the process of attribution. Therefore it is relevant to choose another methodological procedure. Also, the interaction effects of the dimensions and the order in which they are considered by the subject can be object of future research.

Capítulo III

Searching for clarification of the role of trust on Human Resource Management and Affective Commitment: a Moderating model *Versus* a Mediating model

Ana Teresa Ferreira, José Keating & Isabel Silva

Abstract

Human resource management system (HRMS) is an organizational instrument which sends organizational messages to employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). If we consider that HRMS can be an indicator of organizational's involvement towards employees' (Whitener et. al, 1998) it is relevant to understand its impact in employees, especially employees' organizational commitment.

Responding to the call of past research (Whitener, 2001a; Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002a) recent literature has tested trust as an important variable in the understanding of this process. There have been studies which have debated and tested interpersonal trust in managers as a mediator or moderator of HRM on affective commitment, and support for both have been found. In this study we attempt to contribute to the development of the field, by considering the terminological, conceptual and statistical distinction between moderator and mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Holmbeck, 1997) and testing two alternative models that may elucidate the relationship between these variables.

A total of 1328 valid responses with employees and managers from 21 portuguese organizations were collected. A cluster analysis, moderation tests using hierarchical linear regression, pos hoc tests were plotted and mediation tests with sequential regressions were performed.

Both models have consistent results, however the comparison of the models brings more strength to the mediator model, as all the dimensions that constitute the HRMS have impact on affective commitment through trust.

Keywords: *Process based approach*, Human Resource Management, Trust, Commitment, Mediation, Moderation.

Introduction

HRMS intends to promote positive conditions to employees and probably this will result in more commitment towards organization. Following this line of reasoning, Bowen and Ostroff (2004), Bosalie, Ditz and Boon (2006) and Becker and Gerhart, 1996) state the importance of organizational climate in influencing employees' attributions specifically through mediators. These attributions will have impact in regulating employees' behavior and producing relevant individual and organizational results (Ferreira, in press). Research has showed the importance of HRM in predicting important organizational outcomes such as performance (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Julian Gould-Williams, 2003; Becker & Huselid, 2006b; Guest & Conway, 2011) however little empirical work has been made addressing the link between HRMS and organizational commitment.

Organizational affective commitment (OAC) is a psychological dimension relevant in the organizational dynamics and few studies have tested the relationship between HRMS and OAC, especially within a process based approach. Sanders, Dorenbosch and de Reuver (2008) tested climate strength as a mediator between employees' perceptions of HRM and affective commitment. They used Bowen and Ostroffs' theoretical model and found a moderation relationship between consistency and affective commitment when the climate strength was present. Whitener (2001) relying on social exchange theory, tested organizational trust as a mediator between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. Her results indicate that human resource practices affect the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment or trust in management.

More recent research has debated the role of organizational trust and its effect as a mediator or moderator in HRM. Considering the importance of trust in reducing the perceive risk it is reasonable to expect that in addition to having a direct effect on organization commitment, it will also act as moderator in the relationship between HRMS and affective commitment. However, HRM

intends to promote a specific organizational climate which will enhance employees' performance and satisfaction. Organizational trust in manager can act in the fortification of the link between HRM and a positive commitment towards organization as a mediator. Literature uses both paradigms and there is a need for conceptual and empirical distinction in the role of trust.

RQ Does employees HRMS perception contribute to their affective commitment? What is the role of organizational trust in the link between HRMS perception and affective commitment? Does HRMS perception, moderated by organizational trust in manager, contributes to organizational affective commitment? Or does HRMS perception influences trust in manager which mediates the link between HRM and affective commitment?

HRMS

Human resource management is an important system in the organization as it defines rules, proceedings, organizational interests and organizational expectations. It is very difficult to research HRMS considering the ethnocentricity and complexity of the construct. In organizations research struggles with multiple distinct realities such as different functional HR forms (Truss, 2009a); the differences on the set of practices (Jackson & Schuler, 1995); differences regarding different interpretations of HR function (Keating et al., 2000) the HR implementation processes (Parkes, Scully, West & Dawson, 2007; Veloso, 2008; Ferreira in press) among others.

The lack of clear theoretical and empirical dimensions that constitute the construct itself (HRMS Perception) are a major difficulty in measuring and associating it with relevant organizational outcomes such as performance, commitment or psychological contract. Bosalie, Ditz and Boon (2005) sheds some light in reviewing the HRM literature and addressing new lines of research as the search for moderators or mediators in the "black box", the link between HRM and performance. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) builds a theoretical model, focusing in a process based approach and aiming on the importance of HRMS defined in meta-dimensions and sending clear

messages to employees. The authors also acknowledge the relevance of mediators in the link between HRM and performance.

There is no agreement in the theoretical dimensions to be consider and that compose HRMsystem perception. Considering previous work (Ferreira, in press) this study intends to test the dimensions that compose the construt “HRMSystem perception”. The construct will be composed by five dimensions: HR relationship with employees, visibility of the system, comprehensibility of the system, utility of the system and distributive justice of the system.

Affective Commitment

Research on the association between high commitment HRMS and work-related outcomes only more recently has begun to address commitment. Morrow (2011) defines commitment, especially the affective organizational commitment (AOC) as a mature construct, as the extent literature on the topic enables to understand the relations between AOC and other constructs. Commitment is a psychological dimension which comprises the “*relative strength of an individual’s identification and involvement in a particular organization. Such value commitment can be generally characterized by (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goal, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization*” (Mowday et al., 1979, p.226). Employees with high levels of commitment are more likely to have a higher performance and are less likely to leave the organization (Mayer & Schoorman, 1992). Although AOC is a mature construct there are still areas under developed Morrow (2011).

There is a scarcity of studies with significant results on the link between HRMS and commitment. Taylor, Levy, Boyacigiller and Beechler (2008) found a significant and direct effect between HRMS and employee commitment on multinational corporations. Morrow (2011) debates “*that past research has not encountered significant and important effects of HRMP and AOC (pp.*

26). This study intends to contribute to the exploration of significant empirical effects between HRMS and AOC. Whitener (2001) argues that employees interpret HRMS as revealing of the organizations commitment to them and they reciprocate (or not) to this perception. The result will be their personal commitment (Zeffane & Connell, 2003). Few studies have explored the role of HRMS in this theoretical assumptions and trust has also been forgotten. This study will address trust as a relational dimension that interferes in the process between HRMS and commitment.

Interpersonal trust in manager

HRMS creates the conditions, the climate, in which employees and managers build their perceptions, attributions and behaviours (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Organizations are living organisms that are built daily on people's relations and interactions *"from the relationship point of view, organizational functioning depends on mutually desirable relationships between employees and their organization"* (Lehmann-Willenbrock, Grohmann & Kauffeld, 2012, pp. 3). The existence of a HRMS mediated by "strong" human relationships can provide the necessary climate that influences employees and managers' attributions, attitudes and behaviours (Ferreira, in press). Trust gathers the conditions to be considered an important relational variable that can interfere in the chain that links HRMS to organizational results.

Responding to the call of past research, (Aryee et al., 2002a) recent research has debated the role of organizational trust and its effect as a mediator or moderator in HRM. Trust can be defined as *"the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party"*. (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995, p. 712). Despite several positions in the literature regarding the antecedents of trust, the dimensions and the results, (e.g. McAllister, 1995; Whitener, 1997; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Tzafrir & Dolan, 2004) one important aspect of trust is commonly

accepted, the need to accept of vulnerability. This study builds from here, considering that the acceptance of this vulnerability allows trust to act as a buffer towards risk and change. Therefore trust in managers can be understood as an indicator of quality relationship between employee and manager.

Considering the importance of trust in reducing the perceive risk in social situations by enhancing the expectation of control (Mollering, 2005; Weber, Malhotra & Murnighan, 2004) it is reasonable to expect that in addition to having a direct effect on organization commitment, it will also act as moderator or mediator in the relationship between HRMS and commitment.

Literature has begun to study trust in this process and recent studies have demonstrated the importance of trust in HRM. Vanhala and Ahteela (2011) analysed the effect of HRM practices on the impersonal dimensions of organizational trust. They analysed the organization based on its fairness (HRM practices, fair play, communication) and its capability (organizing activities, sustainability, top management characteristics, technological reliability, competitiveness). Their results reveal a positive association between HRM practices and impersonal trust. These authors call for studies which study the relationships between HRMS specifically and interpersonal organizational trust in order to better understand the influence of HRM.

Recent literature focus on trust in manager as mediator and as moderator in HRM. Both roles of trust as a mediator or moderator in the path of HRM and other organizational results have found support in the literature. Next we will review both.

Moderation Models

Innocenti, Massimo and Peluso (2011) have studied trust in management as a moderator of the effect of HRM practices on employees' attitudes. Their results confirm moderation with the overall HRMS and in a specific set of HR bundles, the motivation practices. Fryxell, Dooley and Li

(2004) tested trust as a moderator of employee commitment during a process of restructuring, assuming that in times of uncertainty the decrease of risk perceive by high trust acts as a buffer in commitment. Their results in a Chinese sample demonstrated that trust based on competency is a moderator of value commitment. Alfes, Shantz and Truss, (2012) examined the interation between HRM practices, performance and well being, using trust as a moderator. They used data from employees and line managers in one service sector organization in UK. Their results demonstrate that trust moderates HRM - performance and HRM - well being. Farndale, Hope-Hailey and Kelliher (2011) found support for trust in manager as a moderator towards commitment to the organization, considering justice as mediator. Their findings demonstrate the association between employees perception of HRM and commitment, considering trust and justice as important variables present in the organizational climate that promote commitment.

Mediation Models

Withener (2001) studied the relationships between human resource practices, trust in manager and organizational commitment in employees from credit unions. Her results show that trust in management partially mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and commitment. Lehmann-Willenbrock, Grohmann and Kauffeld (2012) analyzed trust and commitment as mediators of organizational citizenship behavior on a longitudinal study on german teams over a period of three years. Their findings demonstrate that employees who perceive procedural justice in organizations reciprocate in terms of trust and over time they reciprocate with commitment. Their study was conducted in a serial mediation effect entering first trust as mediator and second commitment. Their results demonstrate that trust precedes commitment and that employees who trusted are more likely to feel committed. Mahajan, Bishop and Scott (2012) studied trust in top management as a mediator of top management communication, employee involvement

and organizational commitment. Their findings suggest that trust in manager partially mediated the relationship between employee involvement and commitment.

The objectives of the study

The purpose of the current study is to test and compare two alternative models in which trust interferes in HRM link to affective commitment: a moderation model *versus* a mediation model (for other examples of the same procedure see Lewis and Kliewer, 1996; Quittner, Glueckauf and Jackson, 1990; Tein, Sandler, MacKinnon and Wolchik, 2004). Considering the important terminological, conceptual and statistical distinction between moderator and mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Holmbeck, 1997), we design this study in a differential approach by testing two alternative models, who intent to clarify the role of trust in the link HRM and affective commitment.

1. To evaluate the direct impact of HRMS and Trust on affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 1: Positively perceived HRMS is positively related to commitment.

Hypothesis 1a: Positively perceived HR relationship with employees is positively related to commitment.

Hypothesis 1b: Positively perceived comprehensibility of HRMS is positively related to commitment

Hypothesis 1c: Positively perceived utility of HRMS is positively related to commitment

Hypothesis 1d: Positively perceived visibility of HRMS is positively related to commitment

Hypothesis 1e: Positively perceived distributive justice of HRMS is positively related to commitment

Hypothesis 2a: Positively perceived organizational trust in manager is positively related to commitment

2. To compare two models of the effects of trust on affective organizational commitment.

Model 1, the moderator model, predicted that the HRMS dimensions would interact with trust in order to modify affective commitment.

Hypothesis 3a: Trust in manager moderates the relationship between perceived HR relationship with employees' and commitment, such that if trust is high, the relationship between perceived HR relationship with employees' and commitment will be stronger.

Hypothesis 3b: Trust in manager moderates the relationship between perceived comprehensibility and commitment, such that if trust is high, the relationship between comprehensibility and commitment will be stronger.

Hypothesis 3c: Trust in manager moderates the relationship between perceived utility and commitment, such that if trust is high, the relationship between perceived utility and commitment will be stronger.

Hypothesis 3d: Trust in manager moderates the relationship between perceived visibility and commitment, such that if trust is high, the relationship between perceived visibility and commitment will be stronger.

Hypothesis 3e: Trust in manager moderates the relationship between distributive justice and commitment, such that if trust is high, the relationship between distributive justice and commitment will be stronger.

Model 2, the mediator model, predicted that the HRMS dimensions influences trust in manager, which, in turn, influences affective commitment.

Hypothesis 4a: The relationship between perceived HR relationship with employees' and commitment is mediated by Trust in manager.

Hypothesis 4b: The relationship between perceived comprehensibility and commitment is mediated by Trust in manager.

Hypothesis 4c: The relationship between perceived utility and commitment is mediated by Trust in manager.

Hypothesis 4d: The relationship between perceived visibility and commitment is mediated by Trust in manager.

Hypothesis 4e: The relationship between distributive justice and commitment is mediated by Trust in manager.

Figure n°1: **Model 1-Moderation model**

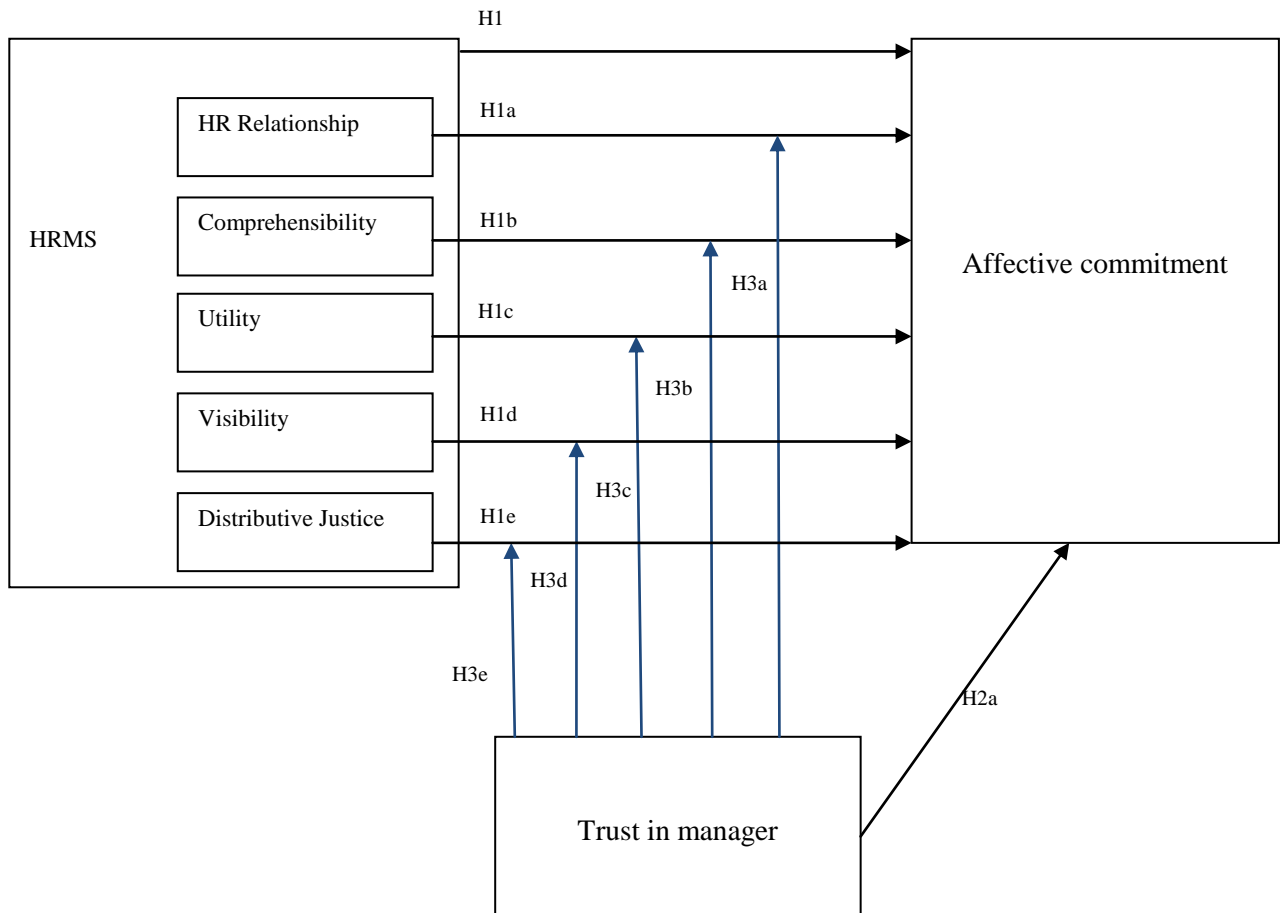
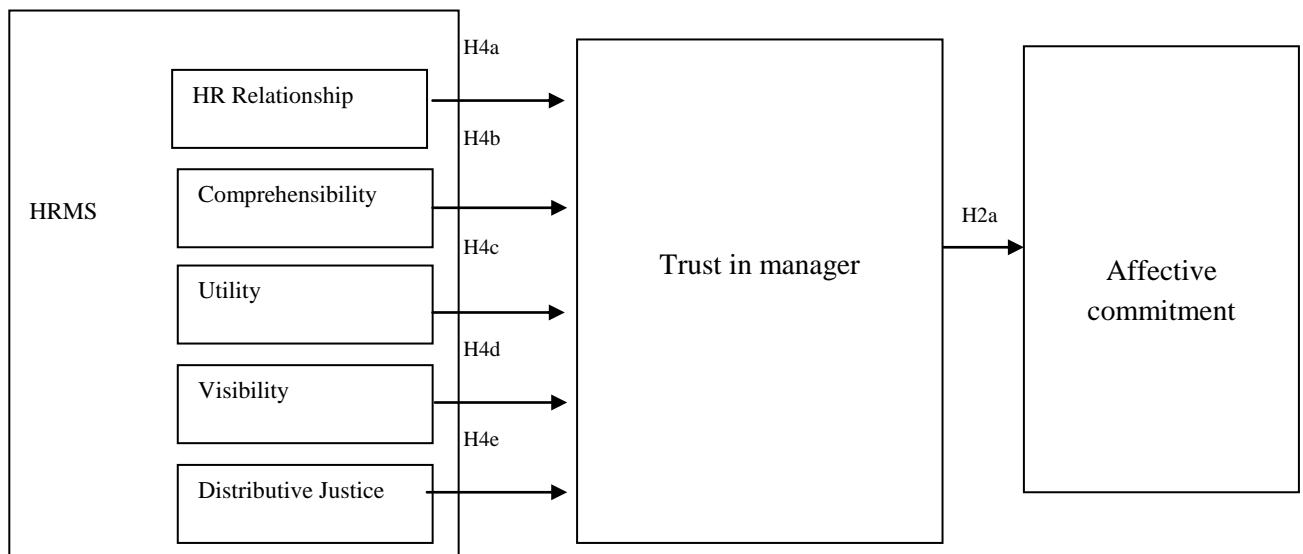


Figure n° 2: **Model 2 - Mediation model**



Procedure and sample

The collection of the sample was realized with the specific goal of covering the largest range of organizations possible from all sectors and sizes, spanning multiple organizational contexts. This study is part of a research project which has begun with micro, qualitative data. The objective now is to explore in large samples and multiple contexts these relations (Searle & Dietz, 2012). The data were collected in 21 organizations in Portugal. These included nine public sector organizations and twelve private sector companies. The nine public sector organizations included four public sector administration agency, four city halls and one school. The private sector companies included four industries (beverage, powertrain and automotive suppliers) three services provider (consultancy and information services) one nonprofit organization, one Construction Company and three schools.

The organizations were contacted through a formal request to senior managers. We had online or local meetings with the HR senior manager in order to describe the requirements to participate in the study. The organizations were informed about the goals of the research and the degree of data confidentiality. A survey facilitator was identified in each establishment, typically located in the HR department, and provided with guidance on how to distribute the surveys. Only one organization allowed the collection of data by the researcher herself. In order to overcome this obstacle in the effective response rate, each organization was sent a pack of questionnaires in paper and an online link. The paper questionnaire was delivered by the facilitator to workers who had no access to a computer workstation. This survey was delivered with an envelope addressed to the research team in order to assure the confidentiality of data. The workers who had access to a computer in the organization, were sent by email a link to an online version of the survey, guaranteeing anonymity.

We sent a total of 4078 questionnaires and online links and received 1677 responses, with a response rate by organization between 5 and 100 per cent. The mean was 39.20 per cent of response rate. 308 questionnaires received were not used due to responses with high missings or due to non

variability on the responses (all the responses on the same rating at the scale). The final result was 1369 valid surveys.

Table n° 1 *Sample Characterization based on quantitative variables*

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	40.15	9.99
Seniority	12.80	11.08
Number of subordinates (a)	24.32	16.42
Seniority in management (a)	2.90	1.78

b. Only managers answered this question. N=209

Table n°2 *Sample characterization based on qualitative variables*

		Frequencies	Percentage
Sex	Male	582	42.7
	Female	781	57.3
Educational	4th grade	91	6.7
Qualifications	6th grade	71	5.2
	9 th grade	177	13.0
	12 th grade	410	30.0
	Bachelor	105	7.7
	Graduation	485	35.5
	Masters	26	1.9
	PhD	1	0.1
Contract type	Permanent	862	75.9
	Fixed-term	204	18.0
	Temporary	68	6.0
	Other	2	0.2
Manager	Yes	209	18.4
	No	926	81.6
Training in HR (a)	Yes	133	62.1
	No	81	37.9
Public vs private sector	Public	457	34.4
	Private	872	65.6
Industry vs Services Sector	Industry	602	45.3
	Services	727	54.7

b. Only managers answered this question. N= 209

Instruments

Human Resource System Perception

Human Resource System Perception was measured using “Human Resource System Perception” a 40 item scale developed by Ferreira (in press). This measure is based on Bowen and Ostroff (2004) and presented high reliability and validity on a large sample of Portuguese organizations. Employees were asked to assess the perception of HRMS based on five dimensions (subscales): HR relation with employees; Comprehensibility of HRMS, Utility of HRMS, Visibility of HRMS and Distributive Justice using seven HRM practices as referents : initial socialization, recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, administrative processes, communication (information sharing) and teamwork.

Each item is responded on a likert scale with 6 points, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: “*The existing reward system helps each employee to achieve greater success*”; “*Normally the Human Resources Department tries to understand my opinion on the definition of new procedures*”; “*The HR Department helps me solve problems*”).

Organizational trust in direct manager: Organizational interpersonal trust in direct manager was measured using a scale adapted to the Portuguese population by (Keating et al., 2010) based on the previous scale by Mayer and Gavin (2005). The scale has consistent validity and reliability. 8 items were used considering the 3 antecedents of trust: Competence, Benevolence and Integrity. Our criterion was to select the items that contribute the most to each dimension. Each item is responded on a likert scale with 6 points, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: “*My manager will change his normal way of proceeding to help me*”; “*My manager strives to be fair in his relations with others*; “*My manager knows in depth the work that needs to be done*”).

Organizational affective Commitment: Organizational commitment was measured using a scale adapted to the Portuguese population by Carochinho, Neves and Jesuíno (1998) based on previous work by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979). The scale has consistent validity and reliability and 8 items were used. Our criterion was to select the items that contribute the most to the the first factor, the affective commitment. Each item is responded on a likert scale with 6 points, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Item example: *“I think that my values and the organizational values are similar”*, *“I am proud to tell others, that I am part of this organization”*.)

Control variables: In all analyses, the following control variables were entered: age, sex, seniority, manager or subordinate, seniority in managing and training in HR, public vs private sector, industry vs services sector and contract type.

Statistical analysis procedure

This analysis is divided in three parts. The first is a global analysis with the objective of testing hypothesis 1 using an exploratory approach with a cluster analysis (Borgen & Barnett, 1987; Maroco, 2010). Cluster analysis is recommended by Guest (2001) on HRM research and by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). The main objective of cluster analysis is to cluster individuals based on their characteristics. In this initial exploratory analysis our objective was to divide our sample according to the assessed dimensions of HRM System. With this approach we can compare different individuals who come from different organizations, based solely on their HRMS perception.

Clustering of cases was performed using a k-means analysis (SPSS) with squared Euclidean distance as the index of similarity. The five subscales from the HRMS (standardized scores) were used in the cluster analysis: HR relationship with employees'; Comprehensibility, Utility, Visibility and Distributive Justice. The number of clusters was determined by examining the dendogram and the coefficients from a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's (1963) hierarchical agglomeration method. This method does not calculate distances. The clusters are built minimizing the sum of

squared errors. The clusters retained are those with the lowest sum of squared errors (Morocco, 2010). The analysis led to the adoption of a two-cluster solution (in the coefficients we have a leap from the penultimate to the ultimate (2915.72 to 4740). Because clusters are based on maximization of differences between cases, we performed a MANOVA. Clusters were renamed and recoded as a new variable named “HRM perception”. This new variable is composed by two groups (1=people who have a more positive perception on HRM) tested as the input variable and the 5 variables used in the cluster analysis were used as the target. With this dummy variable we conducted a linear regression testing the association between this variable and affective commitment.

In the second part of the analysis we tested the essential assumptions underlying the fixed linear regression models (Cohen et al., 2003).

1. Sample size: Concerning the sample size various rules have been suggested. Stevens (1996) suggests 15 participants for predictor. According to this rule we should have the minimum of 330 participants. Specifically in hierarchical multiple regression according to Tabachnick and Fidell (1989, 2007) it is important to have 20 participants for predictor (main effect). They present the following rule to assume the minimum acceptable sample size in order to test the overall fit of the regression model or the individual predictors: $N \geq 50 + 8k$. We have six principal predictors, however as caution we considered the more complex model which has 22 IV'S (including controls and interactions). In this case, following this rule the N should be ≥ 226 . Our final sample is 1328 so we can consider our sample size appropriate to the technique. **2. The power analysis** literature has questioned sample size and its relation with the size effect (Cohen, 1992). The sample size required will depend on the size of the effect that we are trying to detect. The power analysis considers sample size (N), significance criterion (α), population effect size (ES), and statistical power. We follow Cohen's (1992) who determines the sample size for several statistical tests. According to his calculations, in multiple regression analysis with the significance tests at $\alpha=.05$, for the F test of the multiple R^2 , with a population small effect size, that is, $f^2 = .02$, and a set of six independent

variables, the required sample size is 686. Also, using G*Power 3.1 for the Ftest, assuming fixed effects, main effects and interactions it suggests a total of 400 participants. Again, our sample is 1328 so it's appropriate to the technique. **3.Variable types:** We used only continuous or categorical variables with two categories.**4. Independent errors:** Independence of the observations (absence of auto-correlation): According to Field (2009) Durbin Watson values should be between 1 and 3 and the closer to 2 the value is, the better. For these data the value is 1.95, which is very close to 2. We conclude that this assumption has been met. **5. Outliers:** We detected 41 outliers in our data, through the analysis of the Standardized residuals and Cook's Distance. The analyses were performed with the presence of the outliers and without them. The presence of the outliers distorted our results, interfering significantly with the data and decreased the total variance explained by the model. Our results show a stronger model without the presence of the outliers, therefore all the analyses were conducted without these cases. In the final model the minimum for the standardized residuals is -.296 and the maximum is 2.95. Our final results for the Cook's Distance ranges between .00 and .02. Our initial sample was 1369, our final sample is constituted by 1328 valid cases. **6. Essential multicollinearity** (Cohen et al, 2003; Marôco, 2010): We tested this assumption with simple correlations, presented at Table nº3, considering that they cannot exceed .90 (Field, 2009). **7.Normally distributed errors:** We analysed the histogram of regression standardized residuals, as well as the normal p-p plot of standardized residual and both show the normality of the errors. **8.Linearity:** We analysed the scatter plot representing the linear relations between the main effects and the dependent variable, and all the relationships were linear.

In the third part of the analysis, in order to compare both models (moderation and mediation) different statistical procedures were performed (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Quittner et al., 1990; Lewis & Kliever, 1996; Holmbeck, 1997).

Model 1: The moderator model

In order to test the moderation effects, we performed a hierarchical linear regression. We used the method enter and the IV'S were entered cumulatively in a prespecified sequence (Cohen, 2003). As this research is a continuance of previous work, we entered the IV'S following these results (Ferreira et al., 2010; Keating et al., 2010; Veloso, Ferreira, Keating, & Silva, 2010): 1. Trust in management, 2. HR relationship with employees', 3.Comprehensibility 4.Utility, 5. Visibility, 6.Distributive justice. Considering specifically the analysis of moderation with regression equations containing higher order terms, *"none of the typical automatic search procedures is appropriate"* (Aiken & West, 1991, pp. 114).

The moderation model has three steps. In the first step, the control variables were entered into the model. In the second step the main effects were entered. Interactions entered in the third step. The control variables that weren't continuous were transformed into categorical with two categories: Public sector=0, Private =1; Industry=0, Services =1; No term contract, Fixed term contract =1. In the second step the main effects were entered in the order indicated above. In the final step, the interactions factors were calculated (Trust x HR Relationship with employees, Trust x Comprehensibility, Trust x Utility, Trust x Visibility and Trust x Distributive Justice) and entered (Tinsley & Brown, 2000; Baron & Kenny, 1986)). In our analysis both the moderator variable and the independent variable are continuous. In this case *"If one presumes that the effect of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y) varies linearly or quadratically with respect to the moderator (Z), the product variable approach should be used* (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1176). Non essential multicollinearity is a typical problem in interactions analysis. We chose to follow what is considered a good practice in recent research, the main effects were centered before producing the interactions (Fryxell, Dooley & Li, 2004; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Aiken, West, Luhmann, Baraldi & Coxe, 2012; Alfes et al., 2012; Warner, 2013). When both predictors are quantitative, as in this case, the interactions must be produced with the initial predictors transformed

in centered variables (Aiken et al., 2012; Warner, 2013). Pos-hoc analyses were performed and are detailed in the results section.

Model 2: The mediator model

In order to test the mediation model, we follow Baron & Kenny (1986) procedure in which mediation is supported if the following conditions are met: (1) regressing the dependent variable on the independent (2); regressing the mediator on the independent variable (3) regressing the dependent variable on the mediator (4) regressing the dependent variable on the independent and on the mediator. Separate coefficients for each equation should be estimated and tested (pp.1177).

We used the method enter and IV'S are entered in the prespecified sequence, after all the control variables were entered as described before in the moderation model. Further details of these procedures are presented in the results section.

All analysis on both models were conducted with PASW – 18 for Windows and Excel 2010.

Results

The dimensions have all significant correlations at the same level ($p < .001$). All dimensions correlate in the same course as hypothesized in the theoretical model and no correlation is $\geq .90$ (Field, 2009).

Table n° 3: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson's Correlations

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1)Affective commitment	36,38	6,33	1053	-					
(2)Trust in manager	34,77	8,15	1046	.73**	-				
(3)HR relationship with employees	60,77	14,32	1211	.66**	.60**				
(4)Comprehensibility	27,66	6,36	1072	.48**	.50**	.60**			
(5)Utility	27,00	4,41	1052	.41**	.40**	.46**	.52**		
(6)Visibility	27,83	5,67	1059	.55**	.51**	.67**	.72**	.59**	
(7)Distributive justice	12,95	4,85	1295	.49**	.50**	.68**	.53**	.37**	.55**

Note. Values on the diagonal (in bold) represent significant correlations at a $p < .001$ level

Table n° 4 : Cluster analysis and multivariate tests.

	Cluster 1 (n= 585)		Cluster 2 (n=364)		F (1,947)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
HR relationship with employees	69.47	8.92	47.39	13.88	889.56
Comprehensibility	31.35	4.97	21.89	5.56	741.86
Utility	29.00	3.403	23.42	5.33	388.12
Visibility	31.15	4.53	22.65	5.03	726.07
Distributive Justice	15.69	3.76	8.69	3.36	843.96

There are significant multivariate differences between group 1 and group 2 at the level of perception of the human resource management. (Wilk's Lambda = 3.45; Pillai's Trace = .655, $F(5,943) = 357.62$, $p \leq 0.001$). Linear regression tests were performed; ($R^2_{Aj} = .20$; $R^2_{Aj} = .20$, $B = -5.75$; $SE\ B = .32$ $\beta = -.44$; $t = -18.00$, $p \leq .001$). This model explains 20% of the variance of affective commitment. H1 is confirmed, there is an association between HRM perception and affective commitment. As group 1 is the group that has the highest means in HRMS dimensions, the results show that people who have a more positive perception of HRMS have a higher affective commitment towards organization. This cluster analysis was a first exploratory analysis and was conducted in an effort to explore HRM perception based on previous suggestions by the literature (Guest, 2001; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). We now continue with a more detailed analysis.

Model 1: Moderation model

The next table presents the results the moderation model, specifically the regression coefficients for each variable (including control variables) and for each hierarchical step. Every steps of the model are significant. The model improves at each step. The final model explains **60%** of the variance in affective commitment.

Table nº5: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses

	Model 1- Controls	Model 2 – Main effects	Model 3 – Interactions
Independent variables	β	β	B
(a) Control Variables			
Sex	-.13***	-.07***	-.07***
Age	-.02	.01	.01
Dummy for Public vs Private Sector	.16***	.07**	.06**
Dummy for Industry vs Service Sector	.21***	.07**	.06**
Seniority	-.03	.03	.02
Dummy contract type	.11***	.07***	.06***
Management function	-.12***	-.02	-.02
Seniority in management	-.01	-.01	-.01
Number of subordinates	.02	.03 [†]	.03 [†]
Seniority in management in other organizations	.04	.01	.01
Training in HR	-.02	.02	.02
(b) Main effects			
Trust in management		.53***	.51***
HR relationship with employees		.20***	.21***
Comprehensibility		-.02	-.02
Utility		.02	.02
Visibility		.14***	.13***
Distributive Justice			-.01
(c) Interactions			
HR relationship with employees X Trust in manager			-.01
Comprehensibility X Trust in manager			-.01
Utility X Trust in manager			.05
Visibility X Trust in manager			-.03
Distributive Justice X Trust in manager			.09***

Note: Sex: 1 female, 2 male; Manager function : 1 yes, 2 no; Dummy for Public Vs Private Sector: 0 Public, 1 Private; Dummy for Industry vs Service Sector: 0 Industry, 1 Services; Dummy for contract type: 0 No term contract, 1 Fixed Term contract. [†]

Table n° 6: Statistics for the improvement of the model on hierarchical multiple regression analysis

	Intercept	R^2 (R^2 Aj)	ΔR^2	F statistics
(a) Step 1: Control variables	40.21	.07 (.07)	.073***	F(11,1317)= 9.38***
(b) Step 2: Main effects	11.38	.59 (.59)	.517***	F(17,1311)=110.91***
(c) Step 3: Interactions	11.94	.60 (.60)	.005***	F(22,1306)=87.09***

Model 1 hypothesised that the HRMS dimensions would interact with trust in order to modify affective commitment.

Control variables

The control variables will be described now, despite their role in the mediation model, considering that the results were similar.

As shown in tab n°5, in step 1, the model of the control variables, explained 7% of the variance of affective commitment (R^2 aj= .07, $p \leq .001$) ($F(11,1367) = 9.38$, $p \leq .001$). The hierarchical regression allowed to identify sex, public vs private sector, industry vs services sector, contract type, management as significant predictors of affective commitment:

1) Control Predictors with levels of significance at p level of .001 in the three steps of the model: a) The respondent's sex is significant in predicting affective commitment ranging between $\beta = -.13$ to $\beta = -.07$ at $p \leq .001$. Employees from the female sex ($=1$) are more committed than male employees; b) In the contract type, the standardized Beta ranged between $\beta = .11$ to $\beta = .06$. Employees with no term contract are less affective committed than respondents with fixed term contract.

2) Control Predictors with Levels of significance at step1, $p \leq .001$ that decreases to p value $\leq .05$ in step 2 and 3 of the model: a) Regarding the predictor "public vs private sector" the standardized Beta ranged between $\beta = .16$ in step 1 and $\beta = .06$ in step 3. Employees from the private sector are more affective committed than employees on public sector; b) Considering "industry vs services sector" the standardized Beta ranged between $\beta = .21$ to $\beta = .06$. Employees from services organizations are more committed than respondents from industry organizations.

3) Control Predictors with Levels of significance at step1, $p \leq .001$: a) The predictor “Management function” only is significant at step 1 of the model and presents a $\beta = .12$. This means that employees that aren’t managers are more committed than managers.

As expected all the regression coefficients of the control variables decreased in step 2 and 3. Also a curious result is that “the number of subordinates to respondents who are managers” is not significant in the first step, however it becomes marginally significant in the step 2 and 3, with $\beta = .03$ and $\beta = .03$.

Main effects and Interactions of the moderation model

Considering step 2, the model with the control variables and the main effects, our model explained 59% of the variance of affective commitment ($R^2_{adj} = .59$, $p \leq .001$) ($F(17,1311) = 110.91$, $p \leq .001$). As expected, the R^2 showed an increment of .517. Hypothesis 1a and 1d are confirmed. The results show that HR relationship with employees and the visibility of the system directly predicted affective commitment. HR relationship with employees ($\beta = .20$) is the second in order of importance in predicting affective commitment, followed by Visibility ($\beta = .14$). Hypothesis 1 b, 1c and 1e are not confirmed. Contrary to the expected, comprehensibility, utility and distributive justice of the system in this model, do not influence directly the affective commitment.

HR relationship with employees’ is significant in all the steps of the model, demonstrating an important direct effect on affective commitment ($\beta = .20$ to $\beta = .21$). Visibility of HRMSystem is also significant in all the steps of the model. Its importance decreases, as expected, considering the standardized Beta ($\beta = .14$ to $\beta = .13$).

Hypothesis 2a is confirmed. Results demonstrate that trust in manager predicts affective commitment. Organizational trust is the predictor which most contributes to the model. The Beta standardized value is the highest, in the second and third step ($\beta = .53$; $\beta = .51$). The regression coefficients slightly decrease as expected.

In step 3 interactions were entered. The third model increased the variance in .005 and is significant ($R^2 = .60$, $p \leq .001$) ($F(22,1306) = 87.09$ $p \leq .001$). The final model shows that 60% of the variability in affective commitment is predicted by our model.

In the third step, Hypothesis 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d were not confirmed. Contrary to what was expected HR relationship with employees, Comprehensibility, Utility and Visibility of the system are not moderated by trust in manager, as these interactions weren't significant. Only hypothesis 3e is confirmed as the interaction between distributive justice and trust is significant ($\beta = .09$, $p \leq .001$) $t(1306) = 3.53$, $p < .001$. In other words, the slope to predict affective commitment from distributive justice becomes more positive as trust increases.

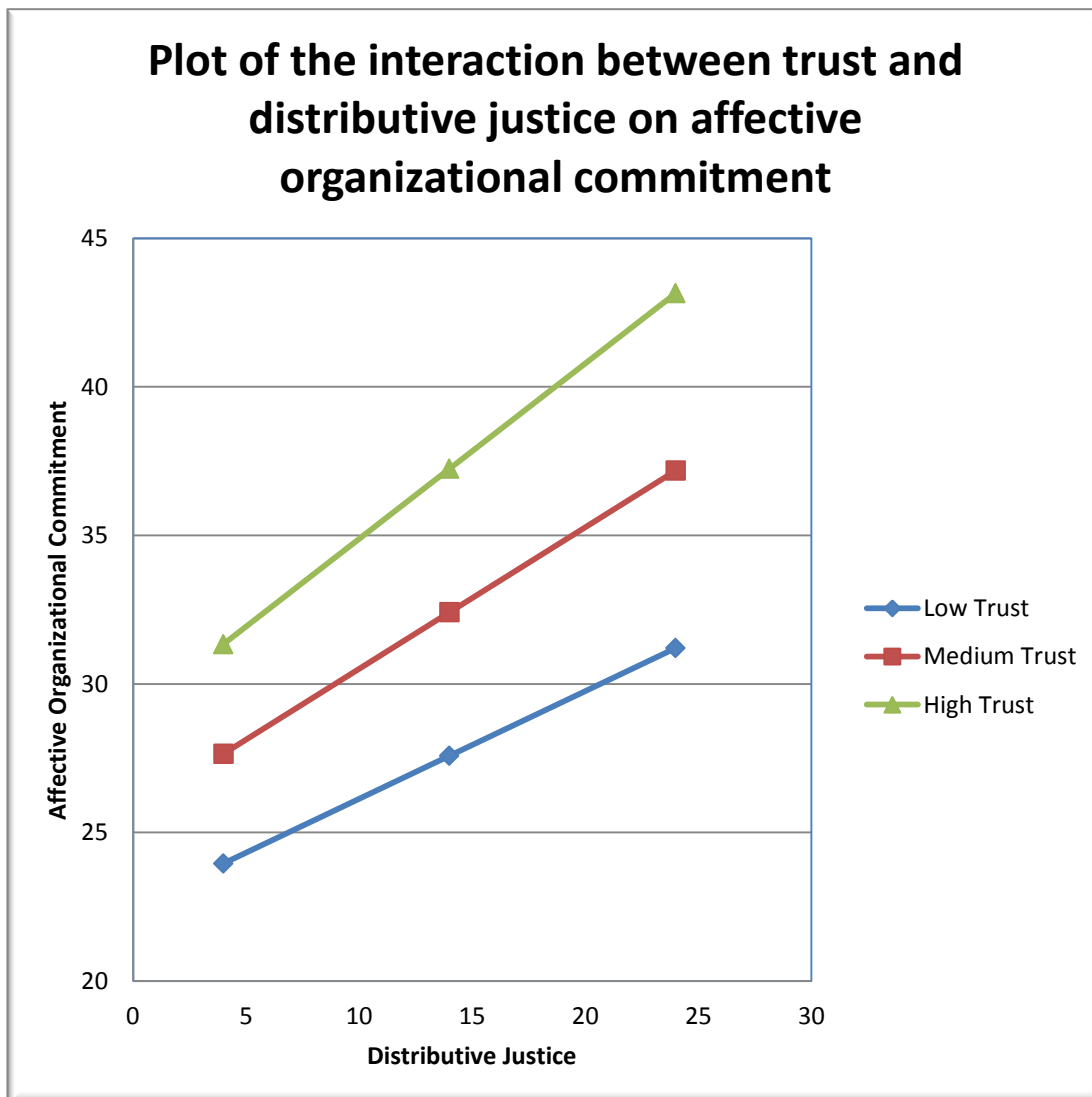
In order to better understand the moderation between distributive justice and trust in manager, pos-hoc analysis were performed. We analysed the simple effects of the independent variable for different levels of the moderator relation. Cohen et al (2003) and Tabachnick & Fidell (2007) recommend that when interaction terms are statistically significant, plots are useful for post hoc interpretations "*Plots are generated by solving the regression equations at chosen levels of X₂, typically high, medium and low levels*" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, pp. 158). Cohen et al (2003) recommend plotting the regression of Y on X at three values: one standard deviation below the mean, the mean and one standard deviation above the mean. To perform this analysis we have written a regression equation for each of the simple regression lines and for each slope substitute the value of X₂ in the rearranged regression equation: $Y' = (A + B_2X_2) + (B_1 + B_3X_2)X_1$

Regression lines for the DV (affective commitment) at: The low value of X₂ $y = 11,938 + (0,397*26.62) + (-0,01 + (0,014*26.62))X_1$; The medium value of X₂ $y = 11,938 + (0,397*34.77) + (-0,01 + (0,014*34.77))X_1$; The high value of X₂ $y = 11,938 + (0,397*42.92) + (-0,01 + (0,014*42.92))X_1$

We resolved the three equations for three values of X₁ and the resulted DV values were plotted. The chosen values of X₁ were: X₁=4; X₁=14; X₁=24. These values were chosen because 4

and 24 represent the minimum and maximum values that distributive justice assumed. Each regression was then solved at these three values and the interactions plotted at figure nº3.

Figure nº3

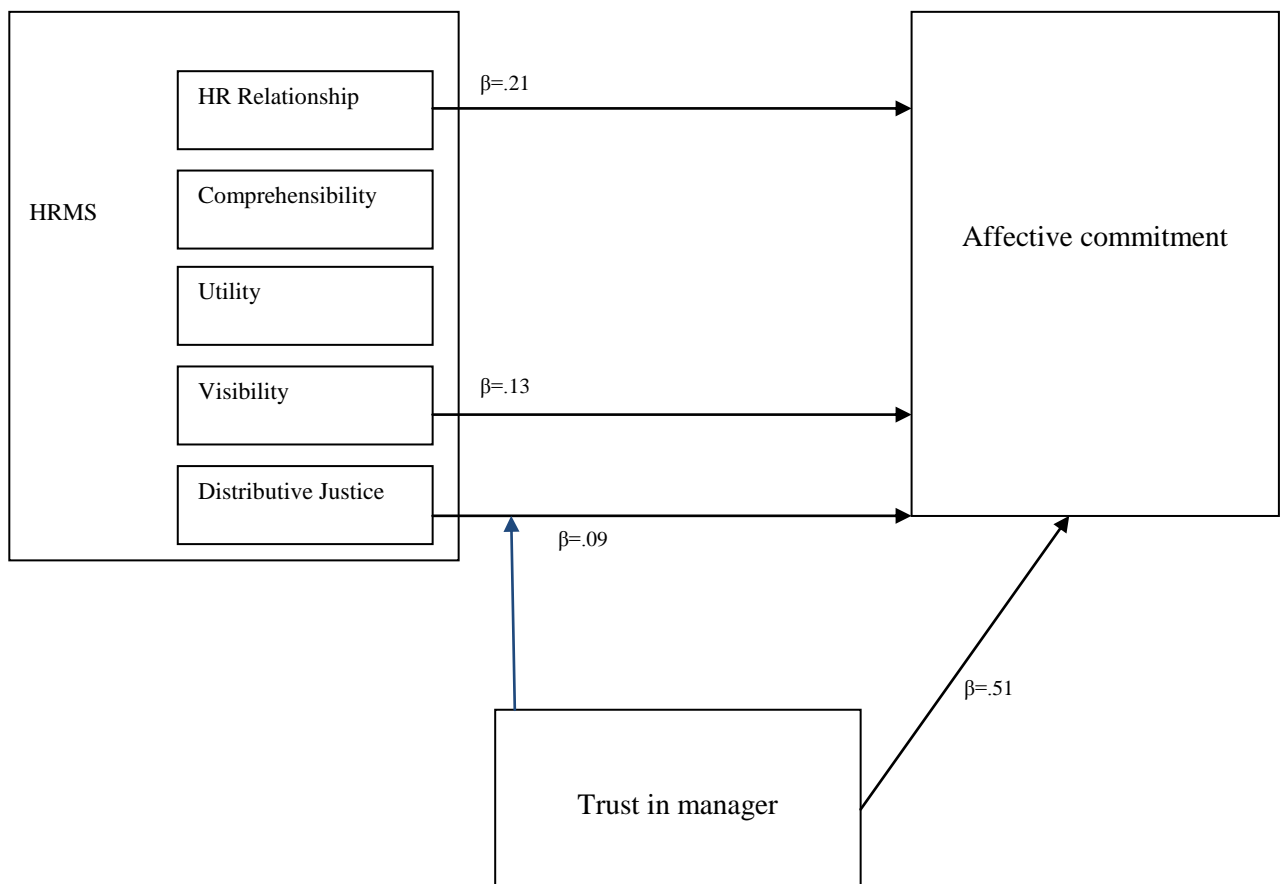


Note: X=distributive justice. Y represents the DV (affective commitment).

The plot shows the differences in affective commitment at of different levels of trust and distributive justice. An interaction effect is seen with the presence of nonparallel lines. We observe an interaction between two factors whenever the simple effects of one changes as the levels of the other factor changes as well. There will always be a simple effect because if plotted the other way

the lines would cross (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). We have nonparallel lines in all the levels of trust, as trust increases the leap in the levels of commitment rises. The positive sloping lines suggest that as the distributive justice increases, the presence of trust increases more rapidly the affective commitment. In high trust, where the effect is most pronounced, we can interpret that as distributive justice increases and levels of trust in manager is high, the affective organizational commitment increases very rapidly.

Figure n°4 Final moderation model with the significant associations




Model 2: The mediation model


Table n° 7: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Affective Commitment from HRM dimensions with organizational trust moderation tests.

	Regression 1 VD (AOC)	Regression 2 VD (Trust)	Regression 3 VD (AOC)	Regression 4 VD (AOC)
Independent variables and mediator	β	β	β	β
HR relationship	.34***	.25***		.20***
Comprehensibility	.06 [†]	.15***		-.02
Utility	.07**	.10***		.02
Visibility	.21***	.13***		.14***
Distributive Justice	.07**	.12***		-.01
Trust in management (mediator)	-		.66***	.53***

Note: These regressions were performed independently and not sequentially. The control variables were not described here, however they entered in all the regression analysis. Note: [†] $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table n°8: Statistics for multiple regressions in the test of mediation.

	Intercept	R2 (R2 Aj)	 R2	F change
(a) Regression 1 (HRM on AOC)	15.28	.41 (.41)	.34***	F(5,1312)= 151.29***
(b) Regression 2 (HRM on Trust)	9.43	.37 (.37)	.32***	F(5,1312)=134.99***
(c) Regression 3 (Trust on AOC)	17.63	.53 (.53)	.46***	F(1,1316)=1294.07***
(d) Regression 4 (HRM and Trust on AOC)	11.38	.59 (.59)	.52***	F(6,1311)=275,53

Note: When interpreting  R2 note that these regressions were performed independently and not sequentially. The control variables were not described here, however they entered in all the regression analysis. [†] $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

In contrast with the moderation model described above, Model 2 predicted that perceived Trust would intervene between HRM and affective organizational commitment. Mediation can be detected when “*the relationship between the IV and DV is reduced when the mediator is in the equation*” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, pp. 160). If the relationship between the IV and the DV goes to zero when the mediator is in the equation, mediation is said to be perfect (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Table n° 7 presents the results for the regression coefficients for each variable: The regressions were performed independently and not sequentially. The control variables were not described here, however they entered in all the regression analysis of the model are significant. The final model explains **59%** of the variance in affective commitment.

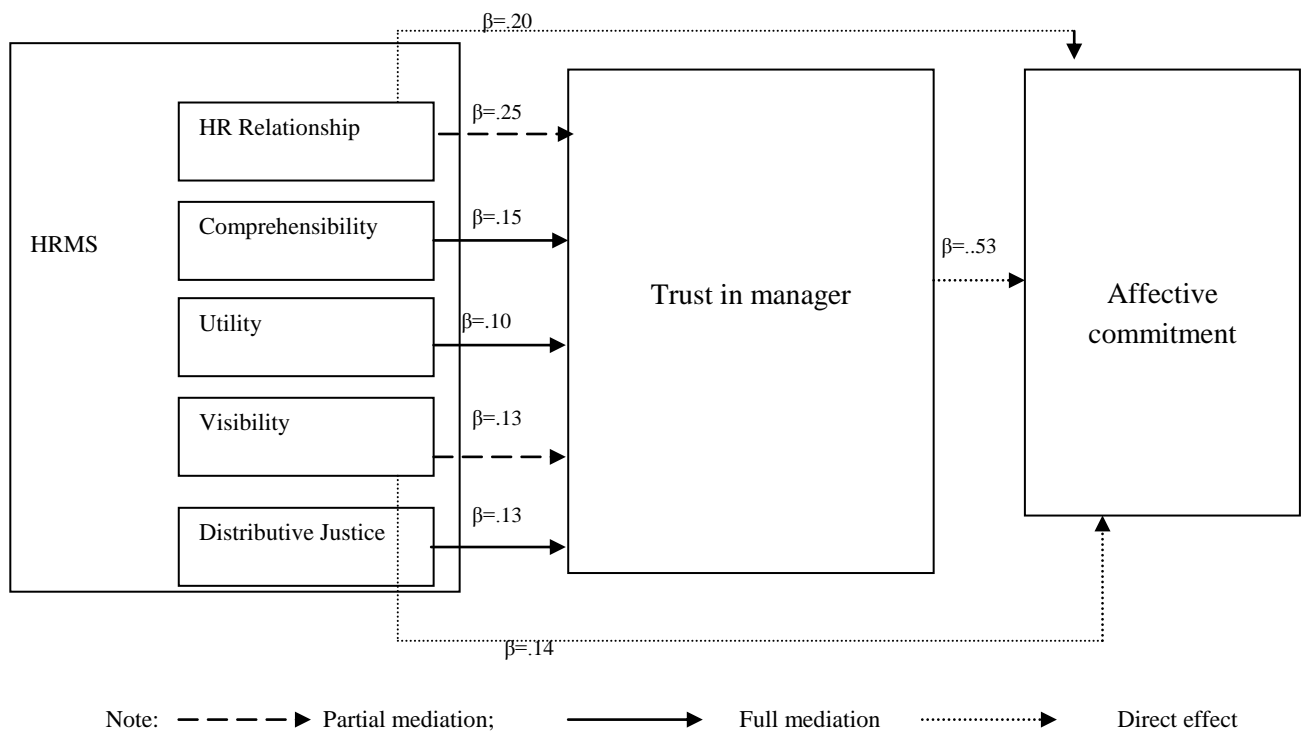
As shown in tab 8, Regression 1 analyses of HRM dimensions in affective commitment ($R^2_{aj}=.41, p\leq.001$) $\triangle R^2= .34$ ($F(5,1312) =151.29, p\leq.001$) indicated that HR relationship with employees ($\beta=.34, p\leq.001$) Comprehensibility ($\beta=.06, p\leq.10$), Utility ($\beta=.07, p\leq.05$), Visibility ($\beta=.21, p\leq.001$) and Distributive Justice ($\beta=.07, p\leq.05$), are positively related to affective commitment, thus meeting the first mediation condition. In regression 2, analysis of HRMSystem dimensions in Trust in manager ($R^2_{aj}=.37, p\leq.001$) $\triangle R^2= .32$ ($F(5,1312) =134.99, p\leq.001$) show that HR relationship with employees ($\beta=.25, p\leq.001$) Comprehensibility ($\beta=.15, p\leq.001$), Utility ($\beta=.10, p\leq.001$), Visibility ($\beta=.13, p\leq.001$) and Distributive Justice ($\beta=.12, p\leq.001$), are positively related to trust, thus meeting the second mediation condition. In Regression 3, analysis of Trust in manager in affective commitment ($R^2_{aj}=.53, p\leq.001$) $\triangle R^2= .46$ ($F(1,1316) =1294.07, p\leq.001$) show that Trust ($\beta=.66, p\leq.001$) is positively related to affective commitment, thus meeting the third mediation condition.

In regression 4, analysis of HRMSystem dimensions and Trust in manager in affective commitment ($R^2_{aj}=.59, p\leq.001$) $\triangle R^2= .52$ ($F(6,1311) =275.53, p\leq.001$) indicated that HR relationship with employees ($\beta=.20, p\leq.001$) and Visibility ($\beta=.14, p\leq.001$) decreased the Beta, but did not become nonsignificant, indicating a partial mediation. Comprehensibility ($\beta=-.020, n.s$),

Utility ($\beta=.02$, $p\leq n.s$), and Distributive Justice ($\beta=-.01$, $n.s$) become nonsignificant, indicating a full or perfect mediation by Trust. Trust is the most relevant predictor ($\beta=.53$, $p\leq .001$).

Model 2, hypothesised that the HRMSystem dimensions influences trust in manager, which, in turn, influences affective commitment. Hypothesis 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e and 2 were totally supported. Concerning the mediation model, Hypothesis 4b, 4c and 4e were totally supported and Hypothesis 4a and 4c were partially supported.

Figure n°5: Final Mediation model with the significant associations



Discussion

Few studies have examined the relation between HRMS perception and affective commitment (Morrow, 2011). The present research adds new information to the literature that investigates the impact of HRMS based on process based approach (Sanders et al., 2008; Guest & Conway, 2011; Li et al., 2011; Pereira & Gomes, 2012;). The results found show evidence of the impact of HRMS on affective organizational commitment. These findings bring confirmation to the construct “HRMS perception” (see previous work by Ferreira, in press). All the five dimensions (HR relationship with employees, Comprehensibility of the system, Utility of the system, Visibility of the System and Distributive Justice of the system) have a direct effect on Trust. This is relevant in the definition of the construct itself considering especially discriminant validity. Also the results confirm our initial assumptions based on social exchange (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2012; Whitener, 2001), that HRMS build an important frame in which it produces rules, procedures and types of relationships (Keating, 2007). These perceptions have an impact in building climates and sending messages to employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004) that have impact on trust in manager. Trust can be perceived as an indicator of the quality of the relationship between management and employees. These results are consistent with social-exchange theory and past research (Whitener, 1997; Whitener, 2001), acknowledging organizational trust as relevant in the development of the affective commitment. These results emphasise the crucial role of HRM in an organization, functioning as promotor of the development of trust (Whitener, 2001).

The present results imply that employees’ interpersonal trust in managers needs to be considered in the understanding of the link between HRM and affective commitment. These findings theoretically and empirically supports recent work considering the importance of organizational trust as mediator (Sanders et al., 2008; Searle et al., 2011; Mahajan, Bishop & Scott, 2012) or a moderator (Farndale & Claire, 2010; Inocenti, Massimo & Peluso, 2011; Alfes, Shants & Truss,

2012). Considering our findings, we suggest that the mediation model is the one that offers more important results. Despite the moderation model presenting one significant interaction between trust in manager and distributive justice, the value of the other hypothesis were not supported. Therefore these results present solid empirical work that confirm the mediation model initiated by Whitener (2001) and with recent developments by Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., (2012) and Mahajan et al., (2012). HRMS dimensions are mediated (partially or totally) by trust in manager. HRMS dimensions (HR relationship with employees, comprehensibility, utility, visibility and distributive justice) influences trust in manager, which, in turn, influences affective commitment. However it is relevant to note that their results are consistent. Both the models are consistent in each dimension analysed and both explained approximately 60% of the variance of affective commitment.

A special comment regarding the control variables is important. Our results show the importance of other predictors in commitment that were screened as control variables: 1) Respondent's sex. Employees from the female sex are more committed than male employees confirming the results in the recent literature (Wahn, 1998) that women are more committed than men. 2) The differentiation between public and private sector have been explored and studied in the recent literature (Gould-Williams, 2003; Gould-williams & Davies, 2005; Combs et al., 2006; Truss, 2009a; Ferreira et al., 2010b; Veloso, Ferreira, Keating & Silva, 2010). These results show that employees from the private sector are more affective committed than employees from the public sector. 3) Also in industries employees are less committed than services employees. This is an expected result that confirms the literature (Guest, 2001; Combs et al., 2006). Possibly the nature of HRM related processes, as our previous work suggests (see Ferreira, in press) that in bureaucracies tend to have a top down strategy, combined with reduced power in HR function and with reduced relationship between the HRM function and employees may have contribute to reduced levels of commitment. Also, in public sector especially the dramatic changes in the HRMS in the last years,

implemented in a “programmatic way” (Veloso, 2008) without the involvement of workers in the process, associated with significant wage declines, may have contribute to these results.

Regarding the control variables, our results show us an unexpected finding: 4) employees that aren't managers are more committed than managers. Also, 5) the contract type influences commitment, demonstrating that employees with no term contract are less committed than respondents with fixed term contract. One possible explanation to these results can be the work by Johnston, Griffeth, Burton and Carson (1993). They compared the effects of promotion and lack of promotion on affective commitment among sales employees eligible for promotion over six months, considering stayers and leavers of the organization. Changes on affective commitment were found and they conclude that affective commitment declines over time, even for promoted employees. So, perhaps time can be a possible explanation in this process, possibly if we consider that time also will have an effect on the existence of more “*ruptures*” in the organization-employee relationship. If we consider the literature on trust and the psychological contract as relevant towards the understanding of employees-organization relationship, we can observe that time allows for the possibility of more “breaches” in the quality of employees-organizational relationship (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson, 1996; Jones & George, 1998). These “*breaches*” have impact in employees affective commitment (Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Russ & McNeilly, 1995; Robinson, 1996; Turnley, Bolino, Lester & Bloodgood, 2003). Another interesting result is that 6) managers with higher number of subordinates are more committed than managers with lesser number of subordinates. A possible explanation to this result is that as the team increases the manager has different perceptions towards its responsibility and becomes more important, with more power in the organization. In previous findings (Ferreira, in press), when HR managers have more power, their strategic involvement towards the entire organization changed. Possibly these results confirm these qualitative findings as they suggest that when power is higher, the absorption of values and goals is

also higher, so it is reasonable to depreend that affective commitment can be higher than for managers with reduced teams.

In the moderation model, it is relevant to discuss the interaction found, distributive justice x trust. This was the only interation present and pos-hoc tests showed that when distributive justice increases and levels of trust in manager is high, the affective organizational commitment increases rapidly. This brings new information to study the relation between trust and justice. If we consider the moderation but also the mediation model justice by itself did not produce results in affective commitment; therefore findings suggest that trust in manager strengths the relation of justice towards commitment. Perhaps the importance of the distributive justice of the system only becomes relevant on commitment, if trust in manager is present. Alfes et al. (2012) studied trust as moderator. Their findings show that HRM practices may have a direct effect; however the relationship is amplified when trust in the employees is high. It is important also to refer that trust and justice appear to have some similarities empirically, therefore recent studies have tried to disaggregate them (Dietz & Fortin, 2007). The importance of disaggregating them is highlited by Searle and Dietz (2012). They call for papers on future studies that try to isolate the role and unique impact of trust. This study tried to add a contribution to this problem.

Coming back to HRMS dimensions it is also interesting to find that there are two dimensions in HRMSystem that appear to be more important than others in predicting affective commitment: The HR relationship with employees and Visibility of the System. In both models (moderator and mediator) these two dimensions appear with a direct effect on commitment. Focusing on our previous work (Ferreira, in press), we can interpret these results at the light of the Bowen and Ostroff's model (2004) and the attribution theory. HRM differences between dimensions can be established theoretically in two blocks. The first more related to the system acted by its agents, the actors of the system (HR relationship with employees) and the second the system acts by itself (comprehensibility, visibility, utility and distributive justice of the system). Perhaps these two meta-

dimensions can be perceived independently. Our data suggest that in these meta-dimensions there are two attributes that are specially relevant: In Meta-dimension 1 (the agents of HR system) it is “HR relationship with employees” based on their competence, consistent behavior, ability to solve problems and listen to people; In Meta-dimension 2 (the effects of the system itself) possibly Visibility is the most relevant attribute. Probably this can be explained, if we consider that visibility integrates distinctiveness in Bowen and Ostroff’s model and empirical results have shown that distinctiveness can be the most relevant dimension in the perception of HRMSystem (Gomes et al., 2010).

Both meta-dimensions have significant effects in affective commitment adding to the literature of process based approach and bringin new results to past calls of the literature to the importance of demonstrating HRMSystem perception in employees individual results (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Edgar & Geare, 2005; Sanders et al., 2008; Gomes et al., 2010; Guest & Conway, 2011). Our results follow recent findings aiming trust in manager as unequivocally important in the relationship between HRM and affective commitment (Gould-Williams, 2003; Farndale et al., 2011; Alfes et al., 2012). It is crucial for organizations to acknoweled HRMS perception and interpersonal organizational trust impact employees’ organizational affective commitment.

Limitations and future research

Mediating effects may provide important information about links between the model variables. However, because of the cross-sectional nature of the current study, all proposed mediational effects are considered exploratory. Also, the possible causal sequence of the line is due to our theoretical framework. Other possible chains are important to be tested, because trust is built based on a several antecedents, constituting a difficulty to perceive clearly where one begins and other ends. It is recommended that future researcher replicates the use of this scale and dimensions

and compare the findings in other contexts, especially in other cultures, as the cultural context can be important in the explanation of the importance of trust, as it is for justice (Rego & Cunha, 2010).

Conclusões

A GRH é um fenómeno multi-dimensional, complexo e local (Keating, 2007) o que resulta em dificuldades na sua compreensão e, consequentemente, no seu impacto individual e/ou organizacional. A investigação tem demonstrado interesse nos últimos anos com uma mudança do foco de pesquisa, de uma abordagem centrada no conteúdo para uma abordagem centrada nos processos organizacionais (para alguns exemplos ver Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Bosalie et. al., 2005; Sanders et. al., 2008; Gomes et al., 2010; Guest & Conway, 2011; Li et al., 2011; Delmotte et. al., 2012).

Esta dissertação, baseando-se numa abordagem processual da GRH, pretendeu trazer novos contributos para a investigação na área. Este modelo de análise salienta o estudo do detalhe procedimental na operacionalização do SGRH e o estudo das dimensões e/ou processos psicossociais que podem ser fundamentais na compreensão do objeto de estudo, o SGRH.

Este trabalho considerou o papel do SGRH não como práticas isoladas, mas como instrumento que cria, regula e mantém os relacionamentos organizacionais (Becker & Huselid, 2006). Este instrumento de gestão relacional envia mensagens aos colaboradores que contribuem para a construção de perceções e atitudes individuais nas organizações (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

O modelo de análise que esteve presente ao longo de toda a tese é um modelo que salienta o estudo processual das organizações e a análise das dimensões e/ou processos psicológicos individuais que constituem esses processos organizacionais. O nosso objetivo geral foi compreender o SGRH e o papel que a confiança tem na relação entre a sua perceção e o compromisso afetivo.

Implementação “orgânica” e influência do especialista de RH

Um resultado relevante desta tese resulta da comparação entre organizações estruturalmente semelhantes (burocracias) que possuem diferentes padrões de implementação de práticas de recursos humanos (cf., Capítulo I). Estes resultados mostram-nos que em organizações com estruturas organizacionais semelhantes, e que possuem o mesmo SGRH (como o caso do Sistema Integrado de Avaliação de Desempenho da Administração Pública, o “*SIADAP*”, nas autarquias) a influência e autonomia da função de recursos humanos (RH) difere. Esta diferença manifesta-se nos processos de implementação e fatores associados. A cultura formal e informal de influência e a distância de poder da função RH ao topo estratégico têm impacto na forma como o processo de implementação decorre. Os dados sugerem que a função RH varia de uma influência reduzida com pouca relevância na implementação das medidas, a uma influência elevada que permite desenvolver e controlar o processo.

Os trabalhos de Stanton, Young, Bartram e Leggat (2010), sugerem que o papel do líder da organização é crucial para a legitimidade da função RH. Os nossos resultados qualitativos demonstram que a interpretação do líder da organização do papel da função RH influencia a autonomia da mesma. A interpretação feita pela função RH sobre a sua própria influência interfere na forma como esta conduz o processo de implementação. Os resultados sugerem que à medida que esta influência aumenta nas organizações, a função RH desenvolve a implementação de uma forma mais “orgânica” (Velo, 2008) envolvendo os colaboradores e usando estratégias que permitam promover uma relação de troca social positiva (Whitener et. al., 1998). As implementações “orgânicas” descritas por Velo (2008) e encontradas nos resultados do estudo apresentado no capítulo 1 têm resultados mais eficazes que as implementações “programáticas”. Os nossos resultados sugerem uma associação entre a implementação “orgânica” e a influência da função RH.

Implementação “orgânica” e aprendizagem no processo

Os resultados do estudo 1 sugerem ainda que o conhecimento técnico em GRH é importante na construção de processos de implementação mais eficazes. Tyson (1999) fala sobre a relevância do conhecimento técnico em GRH e o seu impacto na performance nas organizações. Este conhecimento técnico permite compreender a necessidade de gerir a expectativa relacional dos colaboradores. É fundamental ainda na compreensão por parte da função RH, da necessidade de construir relações próximas e instrumentais com os colaboradores, que lhes permitam adquirir conhecimentos relevantes sobre o SGRH. O enfoque no indivíduo, através de relacionamentos próximos e assente em trocas sociais positivas possibilita que a aprendizagem organizacional seja feita ao longo do tempo, permitindo que chefias e colaboradores aprendam a usar e a perceber o SGRH. Este processo de implementação permite a aprendizagem individual de uma forma consistente no que diz respeito à usuabilidade do SGRH.

Relação entre especialistas RH e colaboradores

Esta dissertação procurou compreender de uma forma global a relevância das trocas sociais, nomeadamente da norma da reciprocidade, nas relações organizacionais. Os nossos resultados sugerem a relevância psicológica destas interações próximas, colaborativas e instrumentais na implementação, perceção e impacto do SGRH nos colaboradores.

Será que podemos separar o SGRH dos agentes que trabalham nele? As mensagens enviadas pelo SGRH (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004) poderão ser dissociadas dos efeitos de uma relação intrumental com os seus representantes?

Os nossos resultados mostram a importância do relacionamento interpessoal como ponto de partida privilegiado pelo especialista RH no desenvolvimento da percepção individual sobre o SGRH. A função RH inicia o trabalho de construção de ligação psicológica com os colaboradores através de mecanismos formais e informais, que se mantêm ao longo do tempo e assente em estratégias concretas. Esta percepção de relação com a função RH pode interferir no processo atribucional do indivíduo, através da construção de um teste de hipóteses (como descrito no capítulo 2) que pode ter resultados na regulação dos comportamentos individuais.

Os gestores de RH trabalham a relação com os colaboradores usando-a como uma dimensão estratégica relevante (cf, descrição no Capítulo1). Por outro lado, os colaboradores compreendem a importância desta dimensão e confirmam a sua importância na confiança e no compromisso (cf., descrição no Capítulo3).

Os resultados sugerem que o investimento do especialista de RH neste tipo de relação é percebido pelos colaboradores e tem impacto no seu envolvimento na organização.

Modelo de Bowen e Ostroff

Esta dissertação pretendeu dar contributos para o desenvolvimento do modelo teórico de Bowen e Ostroff (2004). Os resultados sugerem a relevância do modelo e a sua aplicabilidade empírica. Contudo, há diferenças entre as dimensões teóricas e respectivos atributos face às dimensões empíricas encontradas. Esta prova empírica parcial evidencia uma necessidade de descomplexificar o modelo, nomeadamente ao nível de uma redução dos atributos que integram cada dimensão. Os resultados vão de encontro aos trabalhos de Gomes et. al. (2010) que sugerem esta redução de atributos. As dimensões da formulação inicial do modelo assumem uma diferenciação clara entre os vários atributos, o que não parece ser percebido pelo indivíduo: a percepção individual aparenta focar-se apenas nas macro-dimensões.

Os resultados sugerem que outras dimensões devem ser consideradas na percepção sobre o SGRH. Se atendermos ao modelo de atribuição definido por Kelley (1973) conseguimos perceber que o seu objetivo era a definição de um modelo normativo, quase prescritivo (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). É relevante questionarmo-nos se conseguiremos entender a percepção do SGRH através deste modelo? Será que este modelo de atribuição ajuda no desenvolvimento de boas medidas? O modelo de atribuição de Bowen e Ostroff (2004) pode ser visto como sendo um modelo teórico e o instrumento utilizado nesta dissertação pode ser visto como uma tentativa de integração de uma teoria elegante numa conceptualização aplicável dessas mesmas ideias. Este modelo de compreensão do SGRH é um modelo atribucional. Nesta dissertação medimos percepções e não atribuições. Este estudo contribui para o conhecimento da fase inicial do processo, o desenvolvimento da percepção do SGRH.

Faz sentido considerar, como hipótese, que a percepção do SGRH se divide em duas meta-dimensões. Uma relacionada com os agentes do sistema (relação da função RH com colaboradores) e, outra, relacionada com os efeitos do sistema por si próprio (compreensão, visibilidade, utilidade percebida, justiça distributiva). A primeira integra a consistência e a segunda integra a distintividade e o consenso referidas no modelo original de Bowen e Ostroff (2004).

As 5 sub-dimensões do construto (relação da função RH com colaboradores, compreensão, utilidade, visibilidade e justiça distributiva) têm um efeito directo na confiança. Duas dimensões podem ser salientadas, já que surgem associadas diretamente ao compromisso afetivo: a relação com a função RH e a visibilidade do sistema (cf., Capítulo 3). Possivelmente, as duas meta-dimensões podem ser percebidas independentemente e estas duas sub-dimensões realçadas podem constituir-se como os seus fatores mais relevantes. Na meta-dimensão 1, a relação da função RH com os colaboradores é uma relação instrumental e considera especificamente a sua competência, a sua capacidade de resolução de problemas e de comunicar eficazmente. Na meta-dimensão 2, a

visibilidade pode ser o atributo mais relevante se pensarmos que a visibilidade é relevante na distintividade do sistema que pode ser um atributo fundamental na percepção (Gomes et al, 2010).

No Capítulo 3, o construto “percepção do SGRH” é fortalecido teoricamente, nomeadamente ao nível da sua validade discriminante, aparecendo associado à confiança e ao compromisso, construtos mais maduros do ponto de vista concetual.

Confiança e compromisso organizacional

Esta investigação apresenta resultados que demonstram a ligação entre as dimensões específicas do construto “percepção do SGRH” e resultados psicológicos atitudinais como a confiança organizacional e o compromisso afetivo.

A qualidade das relações no trabalho pode ser parcialmente definida recorrendo ao conceito de confiança organizacional e à expectativa associada de que nas relações de trabalho onde existe confiança a colaboração é mais eficaz (Mayer et al., 1995; Whitener, 2001; Korsgaard et al., 2002; Costa, 2003a, b; Schoorman et al., 2007; Mach et al., 2010; Farndale et al., 2011; Alfes et al., 2012). A confiança organizacional diminui a necessidade de controlo e aumenta a disponibilidade face à mudança, devido à forma como amortece a vulnerabilidade (Mayer et al., 1995; Das & Teng, 2004; Schoorman et al., 2007).

A importância da confiança organizacional no que diz respeito à função RH e à implementação dos SGRH (Capítulo 1) difere de acordo com a influência da função. Se a proximidade ao topo estratégico da organização for reduzida e a percepção de risco da função RH sobre a sua influência não for elevada, a confiança não é utilizada. À medida que a capacidade de influência aumenta e a posição da função RH se torna mais próxima do topo estratégico da organização, a percepção de risco diminui. Nestas situações, a confiança é utilizada pela função RH nos processos de implementação. Os resultados sugerem que a importância da confiança segue

aquilo que Abell (1996) descreve como a formalização da cultura da confiança. Ou seja, se a cultura formal não reconhece o papel formal da função RH, não lhe atribui influência dentro da estrutura organizacional, a confiança não é relevante e não é utilizada.

Se considerarmos a importância da confiança segundo a perspectiva dos colaboradores esta possui um papel essencial na explicação do compromisso organizacional afetivo. Ambos os modelos testados (cf., Capítulo 3) mostram que a confiança na chefia é o preditor mais relevante no compromisso afetivo. O teste de um modelo moderador *versus* um modelo mediador trouxe confirmação empírica mais robusta ao papel da confiança como mediador. Estes resultados são consonantes com a ainda reduzida literatura na área (alguns exemplos: Lehmann-Willenbrock, Grohmann & Kauffeld, 2012; Mahajan, Bishop & Scott, 2012) acrescentando resultados empíricos a uma abordagem processual de análise da “caixa negra” da ligação entre GRH, confiança e compromisso organizacional. A importância da confiança no envolvimento afetivo dos colaboradores fortalece a ideia da relevância das interações sociais próximas nas organizações.

Este trabalho pretende apenas iniciar a exploração causal destes processos. Efeitos causais definitivos não devem ser estabelecidos.

Desenvolvimentos e limitações

No processo de implementação do SGRH, as chefias directas eram descritas como tendo um papel saliente (Capítulo 1). Já muito se discutiu sobre a importância e os efeitos nas organizações de centralizar os recursos humanos (Storey 1995), não havendo, no entanto, muitos dados na literatura sobre esta temática. A decisão de centralizar ou não esta função volta à ordem do dia, face, nomeadamente, à necessidade crescente das empresas em reduzir custos, juntamente com a ideia, aparentemente antagónica, de integrar todos estes intervenientes numa parceria de mútua colaboração designada “tríade de Recursos Humanos” constituída pelas chefias, gestores de RH e

colaboradores (Jackson & Schuler, 2000). Dany, Guedri e Hatt (2008) encontraram evidências que mostram que a melhor parceria assenta num departamento de RH com poder e nas chefias como “braços” do sistema. Contudo, o estudo desta rede hierárquica necessita de ser aprofundado.

Na sequência do anteriormente exposto, uma das ideias que necessita também de ser aprofundada em futuros estudos é o conhecimento técnico sobre a GRH presente na chefia de linha e a forma como esse conhecimento influencia os seus relacionamentos com os colaboradores. A função RH encontra-se geralmente distribuída e parece difícil uma implementação igual em todos os departamentos de forma consistente (Keating, 2007), possivelmente devido a diferentes competências das chefias intermédias e os seus estilos de liderança. Esta falta de conhecimentos técnicos das chefias, em GRH, tem impacto na forma como as mesmas a operacionalizam. A falta de conhecimento técnico das chefias de linha quanto às funções de RH poderá estar relacionada com a falta de formação por parte das organizações provavelmente devido a fatores financeiros, mas também devido a uma falta de compreensão do impacto que o SGRH tem nos colaboradores. Alguns estudos já apontam ideias sobre a perceção das chefias de topo e das chefias intermédias face à GRH, nomeadamente tendo em conta o seu papel enquanto protagonistas da função RH (Renwick, 2003).

No capítulo 1 entrevistámos chefias directas. Contudo, a sua falta de conhecimentos técnicos fez com que investíssemos mais no especialista RH como informante-chave na descrição do processo, que era o objetivo principal da pesquisa. Uma limitação deste trabalho prende-se com esta opção de estudo que constrangi a recolha de dados e que não permitiu ter acesso às chefias directas. Sabemos que a função RH não se esgota nos especialistas de RH e ao falarmos de função RH nesta dissertação apenas falamos destes. Há uma necessidade de construir desenvolvimentos teóricos e empíricos à volta desta relação, dos seus constrangimentos e das suas potencialidades, nomeadamente enquanto executores de tarefas relacionadas com a GRH. Cruzando com os resultados obtidos nesta dissertação, a importância da confiança entre chefia e colaborador, existe claramente a necessidade de estudos futuros se debruçarem sobre este relacionamento e a

implementação do SGRH. Bons exemplos na investigação publicada sobre chefias e a sua relação com a função RH podem ser encontrados em Brandl, Madsen e Madsen (2009), Caldwell (2003), Dany, Guedri e Hatt (2008), Edgar e Geare (2005), Harney e Jordan (2008), Heraty e Morley (1995), Hunter e Renwick (2009), Kuvaas e Dysvik (2010), Renwick e MacNeil (2002) ou Renwick (2000, 2003). Demonstram a forma como as chefias de linha percebem as funções de RH especificando resultados positivos e negativos, bem como cuidados a considerar na descentralização.

Outra limitação relaciona-se com a fase quantitativa e a modificação do modelo teórico. O instrumento utilizado e validado deu contributos na validação parcial do modelo teórico. Contudo, podemos olhar para os dados e supor que alguns atributos possam não ter surgido fruto de um efeito das medidas usadas. Outros instrumentos devem ser desenvolvidos e testados em estudos futuros.

Voltando à contextualização global da dissertação, é relevante continuar esta linha de investigação baseada numa abordagem centrada nos processos. Esta poderia beneficiar futuramente com o recurso a metodologias longitudinais. O recurso a estudos ao longo do tempo permitiria conhecer em profundidade os processos sociais e psicológicos associados à GRH.

Os contextos culturais e a importância da distância ao poder também devem ser considerados em investigações futuras. Elgoibar et al. (in press) constataam diferenças em termos de confiança organizacional e os seus impactos no processo de negociação entre trabalhador e Função RH em diferentes países, nomeadamente considerando a distância do poder de Hofstede (1980).

Considerações finais

Na fase final deste trabalho, gostaríamos de tecer algumas considerações metodológicas. Esta dissertação seguiu um esforço de articulação clara entre os três estudos apresentados, o que constitui um factor importante na consolidação da investigação, dado que cada um dos trabalhos empíricos deu contributos relevantes para o(s) seguinte(s). Existiu uma preocupação em compreender a GRH sob dois pontos de vista, os decisores que estão na base da implementação do SGRH e os colaboradores que são o objeto dos mesmos. A consideração de diferentes actores organizacionais neste estudo permitiu-nos obter informação mais aprofundada dos processos.

Ainda do ponto de vista da robustez desta dissertação um dos aspetos salientes prende-se com o número de organizações envolvidas na recolha de dados e o número de participantes atingidos. No estudo qualitativo acedemos a 7 organizações e a 14 informantes-chave. Na fase quantitativa acedemos a 21 organizações e obtivemos a participação de 1677 colaboradores. Apenas duas das organizações do estudo qualitativo participaram no estudo quantitativo. De uma forma global, este trabalho foi realizado com acesso a 26 organizações. Um dos fatores críticos que pode ter contribuído para o sucesso da recolha de dados foi o esforço que os representantes da função RH colocaram no processo. Parece-nos que estes atores compreenderam a importância da investigação nas realidades organizacionais ou, encontravam-se no momento da recolha de dados, particularmente interessados no objeto de estudo deste trabalho. Vários especialistas de RH das organizações participantes utilizaram parte dos resultados deste trabalho junto das administrações das organizações e nos seus planos de desenvolvimento estratégico. Este dado acrescenta informação à pertinência deste trabalho do ponto de vista prático, operacional e de desenvolvimento das organizações.

As opções seguidas a nível metodológico, nomeadamente a exploração dos processos de implementação, seguida de uma análise factorial exploratória, demonstram a nossa preocupação em

explorar e cimentar as conclusões, deixando os dados “falar” por eles próprios. Truss (2001) discute a necessidade da investigação que aborda a relação entre a GRH e resultados organizacionais utilizar metodologias qualitativas e exploratórias, considerando que o uso exclusivo de metodologias quantitativas confirmatórias limita a inclusão de novas dimensões relevantes para compreender estes processos. Também Guest (2001), contrariando a posição de investigadores que consideram que o debate necessário quanto à natureza da GRH e os seus impactos já ocorreu, discute a necessidade de encontrar novas dimensões na investigação que possibilitem o desenvolvimento contínuo da teoria na GRH. A abordagem teórica centrada no estudo dos processos encontra-se numa fase de desenvolvimento e amadurecimento. Consideramos que a opção metodológica seguida foi, na nossa perspetiva, adequada.

Esta tese contribui para o desenvolvimento de uma abordagem processual e psicológica da compreensão da GRH e do seu impacto. Os nossos resultados sugerem que independentemente do isomorfismo organizacional, as funções de recursos humanos e a autonomia/influência que lhe é atribuída podem conduzir a diferentes interpretações do SGRH. Estas interpretações conduzem a processos de implementação do SGRH distintos, influenciando os processos relacionais na organização. As questões relacionais são fundamentais na compreensão do impacto da GRH. Se pensarmos na importância da relação da função RH com os colaboradores, os nossos resultados sugerem que esta relação permite que os colaboradores e as chefias conheçam e aprendam as mudanças relacionadas com o SGRH. A relação é descrita e pensada como um “amortecedor” do impacto negativo da mudança. Os colaboradores, por sua vez, reconhecem a importância desta relação instrumental, baseada na comunicação e na competência técnica do gestor RH, como uma parte fundamental na perceção sobre o sistema.

Os resultados sugerem que na perceção sobre o SGRH talvez não seja possível desintegrar sistema formal *versus* representantes do mesmo. Os resultados sugerem que os indivíduos não

avaliam o SGRH linearmente seguindo as predições da teoria da atribuição. O comportamento de um sistema organizacional não é explorado como o comportamento de um agente humano. Ele pode ser abstracto, difuso, difícil de compreender (Keating, 2007) e é possível que os indivíduos precisem de o personalizar nos representantes da função RH para que consigam desenvolver percepções sobre o mesmo e consequentemente atribuições causais.

Esta personalização e enfoque nas atitudes estão presentes ainda na relevância da confiança organizacional ao longo de todo o processo de desenvolvimento da tese, pensando nesta como uma medida de aproximação à relação de emprego. O seu papel fundamental está relacionado com a sua dimensão de redução da percepção de risco e aumento da percepção de controlo (Searle & Dietz, 2012). Esta dissertação reforça o papel da a confiança como facilitador no desenvolvimento dos colaboradores face às modificações do sistema e no compromisso afetivo “*When trust is established, commitment can be developed*” (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2012, p. 24).

De uma forma global, os resultados vão de encontro ao estudo de Teo e Rodwell (2007) que descrevem o “duplo” papel da função RH. Estes resultados mostram que a função RH, apesar de necessitar de influência nas organizações para poder implementar os processos mais eficazmente, necessita de permanecer perto dos colaboradores. As relações organizacionais ao nível da interação pessoal e do detalhe parecem constituir bases necessárias ao envolvimento dos indivíduos nas organizações. Estas análises micro relacionais possivelmente podem ser generalizadas pelos indivíduos para macro percepções sobre o SGRH. Se considerarmos que o SGRH é um instrumento que demonstra o envolvimento organizacional percebido pelos colaboradores (Whitener et. al., 1998), parece claro que estes micro processos relacionais e psicológicos são necessários e indissociáveis da ligação e envolvimento dos indivíduos nas organizações.

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Anexo 1

Estrutura do guião de entrevista utilizado na fase qualitativa

(estudo1)



Universidade do Minho
Escola de Psicologia

Guião

1. Organização

- a. História da Organização
- b. Criação e desenvolvimento
- c. Estrutura organizacional
- d. Organograma / Número de trabalhadores
- e. Processo produtivo
- f. Estratégia

2. SGRH

- a. Acolhimento
- b. Recrutamento e Seleção
- c. Formação
- d. Avaliação de Desempenho

3. Processo de Implementação do SGRH

- a. Nível hierarquico e poder do Departamento RH
- b. Caracterização do Departamento RH
- c. Definição estratégia e interferência do Departamento RH

- d. Definição de práticas
- e. Mudança nas práticas
- f. Processos de mudança
- g. Processos críticos (Sucesso versus insucesso percebido)
- h. Resultados esperados versus resultados encontrados
- i. Resultados finais do processo

4. Confiança organizacional

5. Importância percebida da confiança organizacional em diferentes processos de implementação do SGRH

Anexo 2

Questionário utilizado na fase quantitativa



Code: _____

Data: _____
(a preencher pelo investigador)

Caro (a) profissional,

O presente questionário faz parte de um estudo em Psicologia, que está a ser realizado na Escola de Psicologia da Universidade do Minho sobre relações de trabalho. É nesse contexto que vimos convidá-lo(a) a participar neste estudo. Caso queira participar, agradecemos.

Estamos apenas interessados na sua sincera opinião. **Não há respostas certas ou erradas, o mais importante é que responda a todas as perguntas da forma mais sincera possível. O questionário é ANÓNIMO e CONFIDENCIAL, e os dados recolhidos serão apenas analisados para fins académicos.** Sinta-se à vontade para expressar a sua opinião sobre vários aspectos. Procure, por favor, responder a todas as questões, e para cada pergunta apenas **UMA resposta** na escala. Se eventualmente se enganar a assinalar a sua resposta, risque essa resposta e marque a que pretende. Quando tiver o documento preenchido, por favor, coloque-o no envelope e, depois de fechado, entregue-o à pessoa responsável pela recolha de dados. **Desde já, o nosso muito obrigado pela sua colaboração.**

Dados sobre si e sobre a sua situação profissional

1. Sexo feminino ☐ Sexo masculino ☐
2. Idade: _____ anos
3. Escolaridade:
1º ciclo de ensino básico (antiga 4ª classe) ☐
2º ciclo do ensino básico (6º ano) ☐
3º ciclo do ensino básico (9º ano) ☐
Ensino secundário (12º ano) ☐
Bacharelato ou Licenciatura pós Bolonha (3 anos) ☐
Área de formação _____
Licenciatura pré Bolonha ou mestrado pós Bolonha (5 anos) ☐
Área de formação _____
4. Que tipo de contrato tem com esta empresa?
Contrato sem termo (efetivo) ☐ Contrato com termo certo (a prazo) ☐
Empresa de trabalho temporário ☐
Outra? (por favor especifique) _____
5. Qual é a sua categoria profissional? _____
6. Há quanto tempo trabalha nesta empresa? _____ anos
7. Tem funções de chefia?
Sim ☐ Não ☐

Se respondeu não, avance por favor para a parte II do questionário, página 2.

Se respondeu sim, continue a responder nesta página de resposta.

8. Há quanto tempo trabalha nesta empresa na posição de chefia? _____ anos
9. Na sua função de chefia, quantas pessoas coordena? _____ pessoas.
10. Considerando a sua experiência profissional passada, durante quanto tempo exerceu funções de chefia antes de entrar nesta empresa? _____ anos
11. Já teve formação prévia em Gestão de Pessoas?
Sim ☐ Não ☐

Parte II

12. A minha função é de :

Apoio/suporte (Administrativo-financeiro, qualidade, exceto Recursos Humanos) ☐

Recursos Humanos ☐

Diretas (produção, prestação de serviços) ☐

Esta parte do questionário é composta por um grupo de questões que pretendem conhecer a sua opinião sobre o funcionamento geral do serviço de recursos humanos da sua entidade empregadora.

Assinale com um X a opção que melhor corresponde à sua opinião sobre as práticas relacionadas com a gestão de recursos humanos na sua entidade empregadora. A escala varia entre <u>Nunca é útil</u> e <u>É muitíssimo útil</u> .	Nunca é útil	É útil só muito raramente	Por vezes é útil	É muito útil	É muitíssimo útil
1. Acolhimento de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Recrutamento e Selecção de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Avaliação de Desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Formação	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Procedimentos administrativos em Gestão de Recursos Humanos (férias, faltas, continuidade e cessação do contrato de trabalho etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Comunicação (partilha de informação)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Trabalho em equipa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indique o grau em que é <u>visível</u> , na sua entidade empregadora, cada uma das seguintes práticas de gestão de recursos humanos.	Nada visível	Muito pouco visível	Pouco visível	Visível	Muito visível	Extremamente visível
1. Acolhimento de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Recrutamento e Selecção de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Avaliação de Desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Formação	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Procedimentos administrativos em Gestão de Recursos Humanos (férias, faltas, continuidade e cessação do contrato de trabalho etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Comunicação (partilha de informação)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Trabalho em equipa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indique até que ponto <u>compreende a forma como é aplicada</u> , na sua entidade empregadora, cada uma das seguintes práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos	Não compreendo nada como esta prática funciona	Compreendo muito mal como esta prática funciona	Compreendo mal como esta prática funciona	Compreendo como esta prática funciona	Compreendo bem como esta prática funciona	Compreendo muito bem como esta prática funciona
1. Acolhimento de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Recrutamento e Selecção de novos colaboradores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Avaliação de Desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Formação	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Procedimentos administrativos em Gestão de Recursos Humanos (férias, faltas, continuidade e cessação do contrato de trabalho etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Comunicação (partilha de informação)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Trabalho em equipa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Em seguida assinale com um X a opção que melhor corresponde ao seu grau de concordância com cada afirmação relativa à sua entidade empregadora. Lembramos que não existem respostas certas ou erradas; apenas a sua opinião conta.	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
1. A Direção considera as práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos importantes (recrutamento, formação, trabalho em equipa, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. As práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos contribuem para que os funcionários alcancem os seus objetivos pessoais	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Os aumentos de salários dependem dos resultados na avaliação de desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sinto que existe uma relação entre o que é apreciado na avaliação de desempenho e o que se faz no dia-a-dia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Os objetivos da avaliação de desempenho, formação, e outras práticas da Gestão de Recursos Humanos, estão relacionados entre si	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Todas as outras chefias seguem as orientações do Departamento de Recursos Humanos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Ao decidirem sobre os assuntos que me dizem respeito, os meus superiores procuram ouvir os meus pontos de vista	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. O Departamento de Recursos Humanos é considerado influente pelos outros departamentos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Se os meus comportamentos forem ajustados às orientações do Departamento de Recursos Humanos, sei que vou ser reconhecido	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Os conteúdos da formação são depois aplicados no trabalho que desenvolvo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Acredito que os objetivos e valores do Departamento de Recursos Humanos se vão manter dentro de seis meses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. As práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos são aplicadas de forma semelhante nos vários departamentos.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Os funcionários que são recompensados, são aqueles que merecem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Continuação)	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
14. O plano de recompensas existente ajuda cada funcionário a obter um maior sucesso	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Todos os funcionários sabem exactamente quando e o que fazer, para poderem receber um prémio.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. A selecção de novos funcionários é feita com base nas suas competências	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. As práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos são consistentes ao longo do tempo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. As chefias estão de acordo com os critérios da avaliação de desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. As orientações fornecidas pelo Departamento de Recursos Humanos são creíveis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. As práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos contribuem para um elevado nível de competência dos funcionários	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. As práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos contribuem para uma boa avaliação de desempenho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Existe uma consistência entre aquilo que o Departamento de Recursos Humanos difunde e declara, e depois aquilo que faz e aplica.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Todas as actividades de Gestão de Recursos Humanos se complementam para atingir os objetivos da minha entidade empregadora.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Os objetivos do Departamento de Recursos Humanos complementam os das restantes direções.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Os meus superiores lidam comigo de modo honesto e ético.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. O Departamento de Recursos Humanos aparenta estar informado sobre as melhores práticas que são usadas noutras organizações.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. O nosso sistema de Recursos Humanos é eficaz quanto à atração e retenção de trabalhadores competentes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. O nosso sistema de Recursos Humanos é eficaz no desenvolvimento de competências nos nossos trabalhadores.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. O Departamento de Recursos Humanos foi de encontro às minhas expetativas no que diz respeito ao papel e responsabilidades da Gestão de Pessoas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. O Departamento de Recursos Humanos está disponível para me ouvir sempre que preciso.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Sinto que as minhas opiniões e sugestões são ouvidas pelo Departamento de Recursos Humanos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. O Departamento de Recursos Humanos ajuda-me a resolver problemas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Normalmente o Departamento de Recursos Humanos tenta perceber a minha opinião para a definição de novos procedimentos.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III Parte

A 3ª e última parte deste questionário refere-se a um conjunto de afirmações, que representam possíveis sentimentos que os diversos indivíduos possuem relativamente à organização onde trabalham e à sua chefia. Serão apresentados um conjunto de frases que pretendem ajudar a conhecer, de uma forma geral, os seus sentimentos em relação à organização onde trabalha.

Em seguida assinale com um X a opção que melhor corresponde ao seu grau de concordância com cada afirmação relativa à sua entidade empregadora. Lembramos que não existem respostas certas ou erradas; apenas a sua opinião conta.		Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
C ₁	Estou disposto a esforçar-me mais do que o normal para ajudar esta organização a ser bem sucedida.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₂	Quando falo com os meus amigos refiro-me a esta organização como um bom local para se trabalhar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₃	Quase que aceitaria qualquer cargo para continuar a pertencer a esta organização.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₄	Acho que os meus valores e os valores desta organização são similares.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₅	Sinto orgulho em dizer aos outros que faço parte desta organização.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₆	Esta organização estimula-me, fazendo com que obtenha boas performances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₇	Estou extremamente contente por ter escolhido esta organização para trabalhar e não outras pelas quais poderia ter optado.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C ₈	Para mim esta é a melhor organização para se trabalhar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Em seguida assinale com um X a opção que melhor corresponde ao seu grau de concordância com cada afirmação relativa à sua entidade empregadora. Lembramos que não existem respostas certas ou erradas; apenas a sua opinião conta.		Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
R ₁	A minha chefia tem um forte sentido de justiça.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₂	A minha chefia presta realmente atenção ao que é importante para mim	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₃	A minha chefia alterará o seu modo de agir habitual para me ajudar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₄	A minha chefia esforça-se por ser justa nas suas relações com os outros.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₅	A minha chefia conhece em profundidade o trabalho que precisa de ser feito.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₆	A minha chefia é conhecida por ser bem sucedida nas tarefas que tenta fazer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₇	A minha chefia é muito competente na realização do seu trabalho.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R ₈	A minha chefia é muito qualificada e experiente.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

As suas respostas individuais serão sempre apenas do conhecimento dos investigadores da Universidade do Minho e para fins académicos. Muito obrigada pela sua valiosa colaboração no estudo das pessoas e organizações.

